

Commentary

VOLUME NINETY-THREE • NUMBER ONE • JANUARY 1992

America and Israel: An Ominous Change

Norman Podhoretz

Why Anita Hill Lost

Suzanne Garment

On the Road to Isolationism?

George Weigel

The Democrats' Dilemma

Lawrence M. Mead

Freud's Jewish Problem

Robert Alter

The Senator They Love to Hate

Charles Horner

How to Be Politically Correct

Daniel Seligman

Books in Review

**Steven Emerson / Morris Freedman /
D.G. Myers / Midge Decter / George Russell**

How to make a Lufthansa connection in over 200 places we don't even fly to.



When you fly Lufthansa, you never have to feel like you're alone. Because we have more than 390 offices on 6 continents. And over 200 of them are in places we don't even fly to. So almost anywhere you go, you can rely on our people to also be there. Dedicated people, familiar with the area, who can help you once you're there with last-minute travel plans, hotels, rental cars or just about anything else you might need. We can even tell you where to get the best roast duck in Taipei. It's our way of showing we'll go to the ends of the earth to make you feel at home. At Lufthansa, providing you with the best service everywhere in the world isn't just our job. It's our passion.

A passion for perfection.™



Lufthansa

Lufthansa is a participant in the mileage programs of United, Delta, USAir and Continental. See your Travel Agent for details.

Commentary

VOLUME 93 NUMBER ONE JANUARY 1992

Articles 21 America and Israel: An Ominous Change *Norman Podhoretz*

26 Why Anita Hill Lost *Suzanne Garment*

36 On the Road to Isolationism? *George Weigel*

43 The Democrats' Dilemma *Lawrence M. Mead*

Observations 48 Freud's Jewish Problem *Robert Alter*

51 The Senator They Love to Hate *Charles Horner*

53 How to Be Politically Correct *Daniel Seligman*

Letters 2 from *Andrew Romney, Robert Horn, Robert L. Marsh, Edward Alexander, Michael Lind, Norman A. Bloom, Jerome Lefkowitz, Leon R. Kass, Herb Greer, Giuseppe Sacco, Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, Leo Bogart, and others*

Books in Review 55 The Samson Option, by Seymour M. Hersh *Steven Emerson*

56 The Journals of John Cheever, edited by Robert Gottlieb *Morris Freedman*

59 The Best American Poetry 1990, edited by Jorie Graham; The Best American Poetry 1991, edited by Mark Strand *D.G. Myers*

61 Deborah, Golda, and Me, by Letty Cottin Pogrebin *Midge Decter*

63 Three Blind Mice, by Ken Auletta *George Russell*

Editor-in-Chief
Norman Podhoretz

Editor
Neal Kozodoy

Managing Editor: Marion Magid

Associate Editor: Brenda Brown

Publishing Director: Steven Pippin

Advertising Director: Sarah M. Stern

Assistant to the Editors: Denise Rosner

COMMENTARY (ISSN 0010-2601) is published monthly by the American Jewish Committee—Single copy is \$3.75, \$39 a year; 2 years \$72, 3 years \$105—Add \$8.00 per year for all foreign subscriptions, including Canada and Latin America—Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to COMMENTARY, 165 East 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022. Copyright © 1992 by the American Jewish Committee; all rights reserved under International and Pan American Copyright Conventions—Indexed in *Reader's Guide, Book Review Digest*, and elsewhere—Available in reference systems produced by University Microfilms Intl. (1-800-521-0600) and Information Access Company (1-800-227-8431)—U.S.A. Newsstand Distribution by Eastern News Distributors, Inc., 1130 Cleveland Rd., Sandusky, OH 44870. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed return envelope. ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVE for The Leadership Network: Salesconcepts Associates—Rod Baird, Peter Lenahan (212) 941-8172. EDITORIAL & BUSINESS OFFICES: 165 E. 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022 Telephone: (212) 751-4000 FAX: (212) 751-1174 For subscription information call: (800) 829-6270

A Statement of Aims

In sponsoring COMMENTARY, the American Jewish Committee aims to meet the need for a journal of significant thought and opinion on Jewish affairs and contemporary issues. The opinions and views expressed by COMMENTARY's contributors and editors are their own, and do not necessarily express the Committee's viewpoint or position. The sponsorship of COMMENTARY by the Committee is in line with its general program to enlighten and clarify public opinion on problems of Jewish concern, to fight bigotry and protect human rights, and to promote Jewish cultural interest and creative achievement in America.

AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

Alfred H. Moses, *President*

The Commentary Publication Committee

Theodore Ellenoff, *Chairman*

Stanford M. Adelstein
Norman E. Alexander
Maurice S. Binkow
Donald M. Blinken
Edward E. Elson
Howard I. Friedman
Stephen Friedman
Lawrence Goldmuntz
Robert H. Haines
Morton A. Kornreich
Herman J. Obermayer
Robert L. Pelz
Frederick P. Rose
Gordon S. Rosenblum
Gary L. Rosenthal
Michael Saperstein
Michael W. Schwartz
Nanette Scofield
Henry Sherman
Laurence A. Tisch

Letters from Readers

The Two Cultures

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Reading the opening paragraphs of Michael Lind's article, "The Two Cultures (Continued)" [August 1991], caused me much merriment. The genus *Homo* now includes Plato, Shakespeare, Einstein, chimpanzees, and the gorilla. Furthermore, this recategorization, Mr. Lind tells us, was achieved by "highly sophisticated biochemical techniques." I am no scientist, but how can anyone make so enormous an error of categories or in categorical thinking?

The greatest difference in the animal kingdom from the amoeba to *Homo sapiens* is consciousness. Only *Homo sapiens* has consciousness; that is why he is sapient. Are we really to believe that the two Yale scientists, John Alquist and Charles Sibley, who are responsible for this reclassification, had not thought of that? . . .

We must regard this supercolossal insult as part and parcel of white-race-bashing, Western-civ-bashing, and white-male-bashing, . . . which is now so common, especially among the practitioners of political correctness.

John Alquist and Charles Sibley . . . act as if human achievements are worthless; as if consciousness has no value at all or is actually undesirable; as if progress has somehow failed and is therefore not a criterion of differences between man and the lower animals. . . .

ANDREW ROMNEY

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Michael Lind's idea of "the isolation of the humanities from the natural sciences" omits the most conspicuous of influences: that of physics—on literature, art, and architecture. Picasso in 1905 was not aware that Einstein's model of space annulled the single perspective of objects and brought time into the ideational process. But in retrospect, the physicist codified what the painter's intuition discovered to be necessary. T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* is literary evidence of multiple disparate viewpoints. . . . Einstein termed meaningful objects "empty husks," and the artistic representation of the empirical world has been problematic ever since. Heisenberg's inde-

terminacy theory is contemporary with the art and literature of surrealism, which confidently negated rational causation. . . . Cubism, constructivism, abstract expressionism present the geometry and mechanics of the age's physical science. . . .

Mr. Lind's quotation from Edward O. Wilson's *On Human Nature*, to the effect that "very few great writers . . . ever address real science on its own terms," fails to recognize how apposite the works of the modernists are to scientific terms. . . .

As for the failure of Anglo-American language philosophy to include "the kinds of issues about which science might have something to say," Mr. Lind fails to note that Heisenberg and Bohr both acknowledged that the ontology of their physics had been described first in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. Logical positivism was an attempt to reconcile the written word and its figurative ambiguities with the stringent thought process of mathematics. . . .

The humanities are concomitants of physical science whether the age be that of Einstein, Newton, Aristotle, or Pythagoras. "Culture," Nietzsche wrote, "is the unity of style in every expression of a people's life."

ROBERT HORN

Oneonta, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I am glad that Michael Lind has reopened the "two-cultures" issue. If nothing else, this may move the increasingly sterile debate between Western-civ traditionalists and their radical critics onto new terrain. Nevertheless, it is hard to take seriously his suggestion that "biological science might map the boundaries" of the humanities and social sciences.

As Mr. Lind is evidently aware, our most visible and vocal humanists and social scientists have a rather quaint notion of science. One prominent intellectual recently put it this way: "... materialism, determinism, reductionism, homogenization—however one describes modern natural science. . . ." That is, science is just another "ism." Others write—sometimes contemptuously, sometimes enviously—of science's "laws," its "certainty," its "authority," and so on.

AT LAST...



A JOURNAL OF IDEAS ABOUT RELIGION AND PUBLIC LIFE!

Religion is breaking out all over! And FIRST THINGS is here to cover the story.

It's a story connected with some of the most troubling social issues of our time. It's a story stirring the most imaginative intellectual debates of our time.

It's the story found in the

pages of FIRST THINGS.

At last there exists a publication that takes you to the heart of today's most critical religious and moral

FIRST THINGS

Ideas for post-secular America

questions. From abortion to bio-ethics to church-state relations FIRST THINGS engages you in a lively and profound conversation about the ordering of our public life.

Discover religion's changing role in our public life by joining in this extraordinary new venture in publishing.

Subscribe to FIRST THINGS today.

INTRODUCTORY SAVINGS OFFER

YES, I'll try FIRST THINGS!

Send me the next 10 issues of FIRST THINGS for only \$14.97. This special rate saves me more than \$9 off the basic subscription cost—which is just like getting 3 big issues free! (Canadian and foreign orders add \$12)

☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Please bill me

Satisfaction guaranteed: If I am not completely satisfied with FIRST THINGS, I may cancel for a full refund on unmailed copies.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

FIRST THINGS • DEPT. FT • P.O. BOX 3000 • DENVER, NJ 07834 6COM3

"No magazine since the New York Review of Books appeared has elicited so much interest and favorable comment."

—Mary Ann Glendon,
Harvard University

"In the welter of magazines specializing in the ephemeral, FIRST THINGS stands apart by living up to its name. It is unfailingly intelligent, graceful, and lucid."

—Robert H. Bork,
American Enterprise Institute

But, surely, the distinctive feature of science is its method—the complementary processes of hypothesis-generation and hypothesis-testing. Although successful applications of this method are most visible in the natural sciences, the same approach lies at the heart of modern scholarship in general.

Unfortunately, it appears that something is seriously amiss in the humanities and, to a lesser degree, the social sciences, and that the hypothesis-generating and hypothesis-testing functions are largely uncoupled. There the praise goes to the “novel,” the “striking,” the “creative,” and to the grand synthesizers of seemingly endless combinations and permutations of vague concepts—concepts which, although occasionally useful, will simply not bear the weight of the elaborate structures our humanist theoreticians are forever erecting. . . .

Although I, too, deplore the isolation of the humanities from the natural sciences and would like to see the former revitalized by more contact with the latter, it seems to me that both the radical barbarians at the gate and the traditionalist clerics manning the defenses are ensuring that the humanities will become increasingly intellectually irrelevant. Mr. Lind has cited the example of sociobiology. I would venture the suggestion that the infant field of neuroscience will contribute more to our understanding of “the mind” than that well-known series of footnotes from Plato to Whitehead. And, more than likely, our brethren in the humanities will be too preoccupied with their theological controversies even to notice.

ROBERT L. MARSH
Villa Park, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Michael Lind’s perceptive article . . . fails to deal with two important issues: what constitutes an intellectual, and what are the reasons underlying the aversion of so-called intellectuals to science and its vast intellectual and practical ramifications.

Mr. Lind apparently accepts intellectuals at their own self-definition as individuals interested in and knowledgeable about literature, and also dedicated to promoting fashionable liberal social causes. What is absent from this definition is any reference to science or technology. I believe they define themselves in this way in

order to hide an enormous sense of inferiority about their lack of knowledge of the sciences in general and the biological sciences in particular. . . . Whereas in literature they are able to devise irrational analytical systems and use them to support their preconceived prejudices and reductionist notions about human nature and the functioning of human society, they cannot do so in science . . . where their ideas simply would not withstand professional scrutiny.

In my 27 years of academic life, I have refused to dignify such scientifically ignorant individuals as intellectuals. . . .

There are many causes for this anti-scientism on the part of both students and faculty within our culture. The science curricula in our schools are poor, and so is the teaching, particularly in biology, all the way from kindergarten to the 12th grade. Many elementary and middle-school teachers have a fear and loathing of science, often reinforced by stifling religious belief systems. Too often these teachers are atrociously prepared for their classroom task. There is also the factor of poor texts—many written by non-scientists or non-scientifically trained writers. . . .

The two cultures will never be bridged until we develop a scientifically literate populace capable of rational, independent thinking, and an educational curriculum that is suitable for producing such results. . . .

SHELDON F. GOTTLIEB
University of South Alabama
Mobile, Alabama

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Two comments on Michael Lind’s fine article: first, modern science is considered by the vast majority of philosophers today to be merely instrumentalist. That is, science does not tell us what reality is really like; rather, it simply is “what works” in the matter of predicting and controlling nature. If that view of science is correct, then it cannot even map the boundaries of the humanities, as Mr. Lind suggests it can, much less make possible a synthesis with the humanities, which he thinks it cannot and should not do. . . .

A more powerful objection than Mr. Lind’s political and pragmatic one to attempts to synthesize science (“facts”) and the humanities (“values”), with science seemingly always holding the trump card, is

that such attempts commit the naturalistic fallacy. Edward O. Wilson commits this fallacy all the time, as do advocates of evolutionary ethics from Julian Huxley to F.A. Hayek. There is just no way one can get from the “is” of a biological description of nature to the “ought” of normative judgments. Or rather, there is a way, but it requires the adoption of an Aristotelian view of nature. Since most modern thinkers reject Aristotle’s idea that there exist certain ends in nature and human nature, the naturalistic fallacy remains a problem for anyone who tries to create a scheme of values out of science and its presumed moral authority.

In this sense, science in fact has very little to say to the humanities. Many people, including my brother cultural conservatives, still have not caught up to the fact that Karl Popper’s semi-realist understanding of science was to all appearances overthrown nearly 30 years ago by Thomas Kuhn’s instrumentalist and historicist view of science—a view which gave enormous momentum to what Mr. Lind calls, a little problematically, “cultural determinism.” (Cultural explanations, unlike scientific ones, are notoriously indeterminate, so how can a cultural explanation be deterministic? Marxism may be deterministic, it is true, but Marx’s version of historicism was a peculiarly crabbed one.)

It is not surprising that a philosopher like Richard Rorty, who practically defines what it means to be on “the cutting edge” in contemporary philosophy, looks not to science but to poetry for insights about how we should live. The only way really to disagree with people like Rorty, I believe, is to reject the anti-teleological bias of modern science—its exclusive emphasis on efficient causes and its hostility to formal and final causes. Short of that, it appears that the humanities can trump the mere instrumentalist conventions that we call scientific theories.

What Mr. Lind’s otherwise perceptive article overlooks is the strong (but not unassailable) epistemological basis of the arguments for the autonomy of culture which he rightly deplores. Aristotelian scientific realists are the only ones, to my way of thinking, who do have good reasons for rejecting the autonomy-of-culture view and the fanaticism and utopianism that frequently accompany it. But this is

mere quibbling; Mr. Lind deserves great credit for raising the issue in the first place and for discussing it thoughtfully and with insight.

KENNETH D. ZARETZKE
San Diego, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Michael Lind's "The Two Cultures (Continued)" is incisive and provocative, but makes the relationship between Darwin and Tennyson a bit cozier than the facts warrant. If Darwin did indeed have a profound impact on Tennyson, it was certainly not expressed in the allusion to "Nature red in tooth and claw." "In Memoriam," from which that line comes, was published in 1850, nine years before *Origin of Species* appeared; in fact, much of the poem was composed in 1833-34, and the latest possible date of composition for this utterance is 1842, hardly "later" Tennyson.

Marx did look upon *Origin of Species* as, in his words, "a basis in natural science for the class struggle in history," but Darwin was not impressed by this homage: "What a foolish idea seems to prevail in Germany," he wrote, "on

the connection between Socialism and Evolution through Natural Selection."

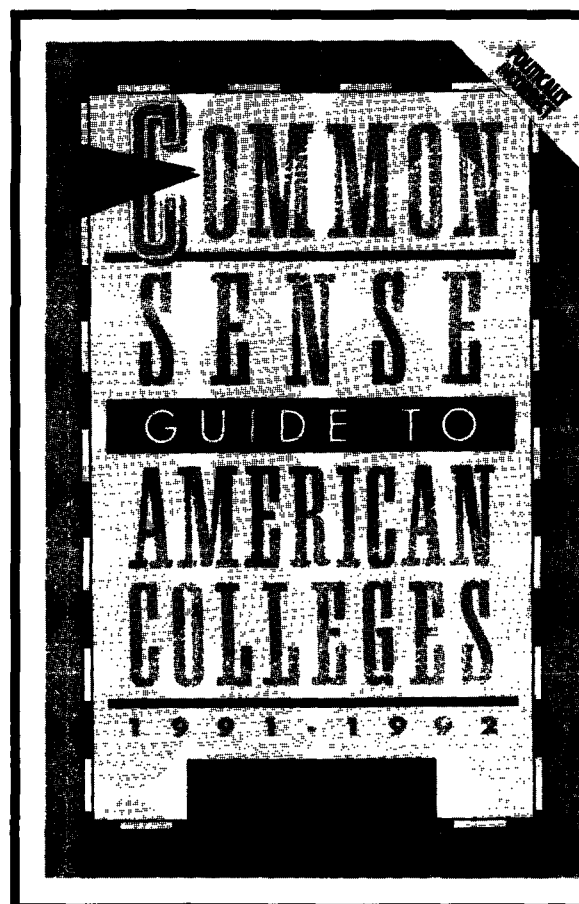
EDWARD ALEXANDER
Seattle, Washington

MICHAEL LIND writes:

Andrew Romney objects to the suggestion of John Alquist and Charles Sibley that the genus *Homo* should be redefined to include "Plato, Shakespeare, Einstein, chimpanzees, and the gorilla" on the grounds that "only *Homo sapiens* has consciousness." If we follow this approach to taxonomy, then Shakespeare was not a mammal, because armadillos are not known to write plays, and Plato was not a vertebrate, because trout cannot philosophize. At any rate, our fellow hominoids, along with dogs, cats, horses, and many other animals, indisputably *do* have consciousness, even if it is far less developed in some directions than our own. Denials that animals are conscious have often excused indifference to their suffering. I would not want to be Mr. Romney's dog.

In my article, I discussed the curious lack of interest by humanists

and social scientists in modern biology; as Robert Horn correctly points out, I did not treat the influence of the physical sciences on the social sciences and the humanities. Had I done so, I would have deplored the immense damage done to the social sciences by the "physics envy" which has encouraged behaviorism in political science and by the attempted application to the economy of mathematical models devised to describe the activity of gases. I would also have criticized the often-encountered idea, endorsed by Mr. Horn, that there is a mystical correlation between the development of modern science and 20th-century artistic fashions, like cubism or streamlining. It is mere Hegelianism to treat, say, Newton and Milton as outgrowths of a "Baroque" *Zeitgeist*. To say, as Mr. Horn does, that "in retrospect [Einstein] codified what [Picasso's] intuition discovered to be necessary" is preposterous, notwithstanding the generations of art historians who have blathered on about Picasso painting the "fourth dimension." Modern scientific advances have built upon previous science,



Finally, a comprehensive critique of undergraduate education that uses old-fashioned standards of academic excellence, social decency, and community spirit.

For the first time, writers with a clear, coherent, educational philosophy have produced a collection of in-depth essays about some of America's most popular colleges.

Look for a copy at your local bookstore, or send \$14.95 plus \$2.00 shipping and handling to:

Common-Sense Guide to American Colleges 1991-'92
Madison Books-Customer Service
4720 Boston Way
Lanham, MD 20706

not upon contemporary fashions in art and politics.

On the other side of the equation, it is true that some artists have been inspired by their conceptions (or misconceptions) of modern science. Even so, when modern visual artists and composers have gone whoring after strange methods in the physical sciences their arts have usually suffered. The adoption of new materials and techniques (acrylic paints, glass, and steel) could have taken place without the wholesale adoption of pseudo-scientific terms and procedures by the misguided modernists who replaced ateliers and conservatories with "laboratories" and "workshops" and masterpieces with "experiments." Cobbler, stick to your last.

This admonition does *not* apply to imaginative literature, which has as much in common with history, religion, moral philosophy, and law as with the more purely formal arts. Unlike music or architecture, literature is necessarily enriched (or polluted) by the larger conversation of a culture. That conversation should incorporate far more discussion of the conclusions (*not* the procedures) of natural scientists, as Robert L. Marsh and Sheldon F. Gottlieb join me in stressing. I thank them for their comments. Mr. Gottlieb's refusal to dignify the scientifically illiterate with the title of "intellectual" is justifiable, but perhaps too conservative. While the genus *Homo* is enlarged to include the chimps, should the honorific *sapiens* perhaps be limited to those who are aware of the elementary facts about their species, its origins, and its world?

Kenneth D. Zaretzke makes several important points. His critique of the epistemological relativism of Kuhn (which applies with equal force to the more radical relativism of Feyerabend) is right on the mark. While teleology has no place in astrophysics or geology, something like the Aristotelianism Mr. Zaretzke endorses can provide the necessary link between fact and value in human affairs. When the subject is the behavior of man as a political animal, the "naturalistic fallacy" is no fallacy at all. *Of course* it is possible to derive a social-moral "ought" from a sociobiological "is." Because the deer is a particular kind of polygamous mammal, deer *ought* not to live in hives organized by queens. Similarly, there

are any number of possible and appealing societies which can never be realized because we are not only rational entities but also primates with peculiar needs and characteristics explicable in the light of a particular evolutionary history. One can call this Aristotelian scientific realism—or post-Darwinian common sense.

Edward Alexander caught me in an oversimplification. The Tennyson of "In Memoriam" was influenced by the pre-Darwinian evolutionary theories he found in Sir Charles Lyell's *Principles of Geology* (1830-33), J.F.W. Herschel's *Discourse on Natural Philosophy* (1830), which the poet obtained in 1843, and Robert Chambers's *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation* (1844), in which he found this suggestion: "Is our race but the initial of the grand crowning type? . . . There may be then occasion for a nobler type of humanity, which shall complete the zoological circle on this planet."

As I noted in my references to Erasmus Darwin and Goethe, the ancient idea that humans evolved from other species had been discussed in Western Europe for generations before Charles Darwin suggested a possible mechanism. As an undergraduate at Trinity College, Tennyson defended the theory that "the development of the human body might possibly be traced from the radiated, vermicular, molluscous, and vertebrate organisms."

Rebekah

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his unbridled admiration for the matriarch Rebekah ["A Woman for All Seasons," September 1991], Leon R. Kass shares the opinions of most classical commentaries (Rashi, for example) who went to great lengths in justifying the stealing of Isaac's blessing. Almost alone, the contemporary Israeli Bible instructor *par excellence*, Nehama Leibowitz, in her *Studies in Bereshit*, stands firm in insisting that an alternate view be presented: that Rebekah's action was an unmitigated disaster for Jacob, and needlessly doomed him to great suffering and misery.

Jacob's troubled life, discussed by Mr. Kass only in a brief footnote, may also be seen as retribution in kind for his dishonesty. Thus, Jacob is deceived on his wedding night, when, blinded by darkness,

he mistakes one sibling (Leah) for another (Rachel). The parallel to his own indiscretion is strikingly clear; accenting it further is Laban's justification that in Haran (unlike Jacob's home in Canaan?) it is not considered proper to have the younger child preempt the privileges of the first-born.

The midrash is even more explicit in stressing the principle of *midah k'neged midah*—measure for measure—as a major determinant of Jacob's tribulations. It describes a bewildered Jacob arising in the morning to see Leah lying beside him. He berates her dishonesty in having answered to the name of Rachel throughout the night but now to the name of Leah; she retorts that in the practice of chicanery it was Jacob who served as her role model, for was it not true that when his father called him Esau he responded, as he also did when his father called him Jacob?

The consequence of Jacob's unplanned marriage to two sisters was a home racked by unceasing strife. The rivalry between Jacob's wives, one loved and the other scorned, would eventually be transferred to their respective children. Joseph's tragic conflict with his brothers, bringing in its wake many years of inconsolable anguish to their father, was its natural outcome, as was the exile that ensued.

Unlike the other two patriarchs, both of whom died "old and full of years" in Canaan, Jacob was to end his "few and troubled" days in a foreign land. Genesis ends on a darkly somber note; its concluding chapter is pervaded by a palpable sense that the vise of Egyptian oppression is already beginning to tighten. Rebekah's ill-conceived advice turns out to have cast an indelible pall over the life of her son from which he and his immediate descendants never escaped.

The appeal of the biblical sense of justice is its universality; everyone, even revered patriarchs, must respect it or suffer the consequences. Ends never justify means; thievery in the final reckoning remains just that—no matter how lofty its motives or exalted its perpetrators.

NORMAN A. BLOOM
North Miami Beach, Florida

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I find myself in agreement with Leon R. Kass's major theses in "A Woman for All Seasons." He is right in saying that Rebekah is the most fully developed and most en-

daring female character portrayed in the Bible, and in pointing out that diplomatic manipulation is likely to be more beneficial than confrontation in interpersonal relations, just as it is in international relations. Brutal honesty may be more brutal than honest. I would like to suggest, however, that Isaac may have been less naive than Mr. Kass, tradition, or even Rebekah perceived him to be.

Isaac clearly favored Esau over Jacob. Was that naive? Perhaps. But the Esau (of Genesis 33) who greeted his brother warmly upon Jacob's return from Aram is as sympathetic a person as Jacob ever was. He may have been mercurial, but he had qualities that a father could cherish above those of Jacob. The Bible certainly does not conceal Jacob's deviousness and self-pity.

And so Isaac chose to bestow a blessing of prosperity upon Esau that included material lordship over his brother. That is the blessing which he mistakenly gave to Jacob. Later, with every reason to be angry with Jacob for his deception, Isaac nevertheless gave an alternative blessing of material good to Esau. The important blessing of Abraham, however, Isaac neither gave to Esau nor intended to give to him. Only when Isaac knowingly had Jacob before him did he bestow that blessing of the possession of the land promised to Abraham.

It appears to me that Isaac knew his sons as well as Rebekah did. He may have favored Esau, and may have had good reason. But he knew that Jacob, and not Esau, was qualified to transmit God's covenant to posterity.

JEROME LEFKOWITZ
Albany, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Leon R. Kass's article is both remarkable for its insights into the character of Rebekah and delightful for its style. . . . Equally penetrating are the author's closing remarks, where he points up the relevance of Rebekah as a model for women's role in the family today. My one criticism is that Mr. Kass fails to mention that many of these insights are also to be found in the classic commentaries on the Bible.

For example, in discussing the words spoken by Eve after the birth of Cain—"kaniti ish et adonai"—Mr. Kass takes issue with the conventional translation of these words as "I have gotten a man with

the help of the Lord." "In my view," he writes, "[t]he context favors 'I have gotten a man (equally) with God'—or in plain speech, 'God created a man, and now so have I.'" But Rashi's commentary on this same passage is very similar. According to Rashi, the meaning of Eve's words is as follows: "When [God] created me and my husband, he did it alone; with this [the birth of Cain] we are partners with God."

Similarly, in the matter of Isaac's blessing of his son Jacob, Mr. Kass praises Rebekah for her role in amplifying the words of Isaac ("and I will bless you *before God*") so as to ensure that the blessing, and hence Jacob's assumption of his birthright, has divine sanction. Mr. Kass's observation on how Rebekah, "reporting her husband's words to Jacob, improves them, placing God's name, so to speak, onto Isaac's tongue, and also into Jacob's mind" is brilliant. Again, however, a similar commentary on the same verse is given by Nahmanides, who points out that the words "before God" are not spoken by Isaac, but only by Rebekah.

According to Nahmanides, "In this entire chapter there is no mention of the words, 'before God'; it is only the mother who said this to Jacob, so that the blessing would be in the holy spirit [*ruah ha-kodesh*]." Finally, there are several other interpretations offered by Mr. Kass which are to be found in chapter 40 of *Beresheet Rabah*, a commentary on the Book of Genesis. . . .

True, none of the sources I have quoted portrays Rebekah in Mr. Kass's striking fashion. Still, had he quoted, or even referred to, some of these midrashim, they would have lent greater authenticity to his description of Rebekah as a "woman for all seasons."

[Rabbi] MAYER ABRAMOWITZ
Jewish Leadership Institute
Miami Beach, Florida

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Many thanks for Leon R. Kass's "A Woman for All Seasons." What an excellent thing that one can still be reminded of how to read by an article in a magazine available at any good newsstand.

DANIEL LEHRMAN
Minneapolis, Minnesota

The style, prestige and sophistication—without the expense. . .

18k Gold-Plated Sojourner Watch only \$99⁰⁰*

**But read this ad for an even better deal!*

The Sojourner Watch is 18k gold-plated, in 5-micron thickness. It will maintain its finish and exquisite looks for your lifetime and that of your heir. In addition to the main dial, the Sojourner features three inset dials showing month, day of week, 29½-day lunar phase, and a peripheral date hand. An alligator-patterned leather strap caps off this luxury timepiece. The Sojourner is steered by a superb Japanese dual-cycle quartz movement—one cycle for solar time and one for lunar time. It is powered by a tiny mercury cell that you should not have to exchange for 18 months.

Our distinguished French (famous name) competitors sell a very similar watch through America's finest jewelry stores for \$9,750. The Sojourner sells for just \$99. But we have an even better deal than that almost incredible price: Buy two Sojourners for \$198, and we'll send you a third one, with our compliments—absolutely FREE! The Sojourner Watch by Rodell-7 is our contribution to your impressive style. Order your 18k gold-plated Sojourner Watch today!



• Each Sojourner Watch is individually numbered, registered and engraved on the stainless steel back with owner's name. Please give us clear spellings of name(s) for engraving.

FOR FASTEST SERVICE, ORDER
TOLL FREE (800) 882-3050

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Please give order #5088B116. If you prefer, mail check or card authorization and expiration. Be sure to give us clear spellings of name(s) for engraving. Add ship./insur: \$3.50 for one, \$10.50 for three. Add sales tax for CA delivery. You have 30-day return privilege and one-year warranty (battery excluded).

Looking for a bargain? Come in and visit our Catalog Outlet in San Francisco.

since 1967
haverhills®
—of San Francisco—

139 Townsend Street, San Francisco, CA 94107

LEON R. KASS writes:

First let me express my gratitude to all the correspondents for addressing my interpretation of the text. Frankly, I expected something of an outcry about the inferences I tried to draw regarding the role of women and the problem of transmission in today's society. I shall not assume from the silence that everyone is persuaded that Rebekah might *still* be a woman for all seasons.

Norman A. Bloom, following Nehama Leibowitz, does not think Rebekah was admirable, even in her day. He raises important arguments, mostly based on the troubles in the life of Jacob, which he regards as measure-for-measure "retribution" for the deception of Isaac, in turn to be blamed on—who else?—his mother, Rebekah. With part of his argument I concur: Jacob does indeed suffer in kind for his own shrewdness. Like Odysseus, whom he resembles, he is made to wander far and endure much before he is truly fit to inherit the blessing of Abraham. In the wonderful moral universe of the Torah, "misdeeds," even when justifiable on grounds of necessity, are not simply lost and forgotten; the biblical author is not Machiavelli. But the trouble with Jacob is not mainly his mother's fault; *post hoc ergo propter hoc* is a fallacy. Jacob was even in the womb a supplanter (see the episode of Jacob's birth, with his "hand on Esau's heel," Genesis 25:26), and his guile and aspirations to self-sufficiency precede the deception of his father. Rebekah helps to start Jacob on a course—full of traps and troubles, to be sure—that does eventually educate Jacob in the ways of God and righteousness, precisely *by means of* his troubles. But this argument is for the essay I have not yet written.

What Mr. Bloom and other moralistic readers of Genesis fail to appreciate is the sociopolitical problem human beings face—especially in a period of founding and *before* the coming of law and its morality—of how to transmit "the way" in the face of almost insuperable obstacles: weak fathers, sibling enmity, foreign dangers and temptations, and the usually wayward leanings of the uninstructed human heart. Let the critics of Rebekah, remembering the context and the task of transmission (and remembering especially the story

of Cain and Abel), find a better answer than hers to the question she faced, and which I had put as follows: "How to replace the order of birth and strength with the order of merit, *without fratricide*. Second, how to do this *with the support and blessing* of a less-than-right father who, to begin with, foolishly prefers the wrong son." Only prudence—not moralism—can find the just-right-thing-to-do-in-light-of-the-circumstances, and Rebekah the prudent surely found it.

Jerome Lefkowitz is not persuaded that Isaac is foolish in preferring Esau. I grant that Esau had his virtues—who doesn't?—not least his loyalty to Isaac and his more direct and "manly" ways. But the text undercuts Isaac's expressed preference for Esau by linking it immediately with the story of the sale of the birthright, in which Esau shows his radical defectiveness by despising his inheritance. Paternal preference which ignores and subverts the paternal work of transmission can only be called foolish. Further, there is no textual evidence that Isaac originally intended to give the blessing of Abraham to Jacob. Indeed, there is no evidence that he intended to give to *either son* any blessing except for material prosperity and lordship *until after he is brought to his senses thanks to the deception*, which, I argue, teaches him for the first time that he has long deceived himself. Before this episode, Isaac's piety—regarding both Abraham and God—cannot be taken for granted, and a careful reading of the text calls it into question.

This leads to a general comment on my approach to the text, which will serve also as a reply to Rabbi Mayer Abramowitz. I am, of course, always pleased to discover that my insights are not my insights alone, for I seek neither originality nor priority but understanding. But I have deliberately chosen to approach the text *without* the benefit of the traditional commentaries, for many reasons. I try in my classes on Genesis to enable all my students to make this book speak to them, directly and without regard to their prior religious commitments. I am less interested in the religious use made of the text than in the "teachings" of the text itself, which I believe must be accessible to any careful reader without intermediaries. Because I read the text "philosophically"—that is,

in search of wisdom—and find that, so read, it addresses enduring questions of moral and political philosophy, I cannot count on much help from sources that often supply simply pious answers to genuine perplexities opened up by the text. (An example: Abraham's smashing of his father's idols, proving his precocious monotheism, closes off a great question raised by Genesis before it can be pondered: *why* does Abraham harken when God calls? Does he really know who is speaking?) Other traditional commentators expound the text apologetically or with a view to law and observance (i.e., with *halakhic* concerns), practices which, however illuminating, may not help sufficiently in finding the meaning of the text as an unfolding book. Though I fully expect (and hope) that my unmediated readings will often agree with tradition, I think we are well advised, *if it is the book itself that we wish to understand*, to try to read it as directly and naively as possible.

It should now be clear why I regard Daniel Lehrman's letter as one of the finest compliments I have ever received. I thank him for it.

European Unity

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Giuseppe Sacco's dream of "Saving Europe from Itself" [September 1991] shows a definite, if rather grudging, streak of common sense—notably about economic matters. But his discussion of peace through federalism on the American model is almost completely utopian. Other figures, especially the egregious Edward Heath, are also pushing the federal model of Europe, blithely waving aside the factors which make the American comparison in particular grotesquely at odds with real life.

The American colonies enjoyed special advantages. They did not found a new social order, but essentially codified an order that already existed in the colonies. The lack of local cultural roots helped to incorporate "foreign" (i.e., non-English-speaking) minorities into that order, as did a certain sense of political and territorial *tabula rasa* on a continent relatively new to Europeans. None of these advantages exists in Europe today.

To belabor the desirability of European federalism in terms of peace

is silly: nonviolent competition among Europeans may be desirable, but peace as an objective is a concept which lacks focus, both intellectually and in concrete terms. As we saw during the cold war, military conflict is not necessary in order to destroy peace.

The barriers to federalism among European nations—including language, traditions, folk enmities and prejudice, territorial identity, all attached to an essentially selfish sense of each nation's interests—are not about to dissolve in a gush of enthusiasm for peace. European unity, when and if it comes about, will be agreed to on the basis of national interests, which still vary widely. As for the American model, irreconcilable sectional interests existed in the United States well after the colonies agreed on a Constitution; some of these exploded into a bloody civil war which was fought to unify the American nation once and for all. Let Europeans beware of facile references to American federalism.

HERB GREER

Manchester, England

GIUSEPPE SACCO writes:

In his letter, Herb Greer raises two main points, both of which make good sense.

First of all, he comments that the project for a future united Europe really cannot be compared with the process of unification of the American colonies two centuries ago, owing to the far greater historical and cultural diversity of the European nations. It would be difficult for me to disagree, especially since this remark only reinforces the main point of my article. The United States, starting from far more homogeneous components than Europe, found it opportune to follow a strategy of nonentanglement in foreign quarrels that could adversely affect relations among immigrants of different national origin. A similar measure of prudence is even more necessary in the case of Europe, whose unity is intrinsically more fragile.

In his second point, Mr. Greer seems to find my attitude in favor of a speedy European unification somewhat utopian, and stresses his belief that for a long time to come the interests of the nation-states will predominate in the concerns of Europeans. Obviously, Mr. Greer cannot believe this is a concept I have not heard before, endlessly repeated as it is in Britain, where he

happens to live. Only time will tell who is right—the majority of the Britons or those, like myself, who are convinced that the idea of mutual interest has seriously taken root in the Western part of continental Europe. Indeed, what seems to have taken root even more deeply is dissatisfaction with traditional nation-states, too small and weak to make Europeans feel they are really masters of their destiny, yet too big and too diverse to avoid crushing the individual in the anonymity of mass society. This dissatisfaction with the nation-state, which is at the source of the proximity sentiment of a large sector of public opinion, is also clearly manifested in the revival of micro-nationalisms all over the old continent, a revival that sometimes takes the form of a semi-romantic search for “roots” in Scottish, Corsican, and Catalan dream-fatherlands, but in other cases ends up being the nightmare of Balkan and East European micro-nationalisms.

Thus, frankly speaking, the

problem with the process of European unification seems to be not so much the surviving strength of the nation-states, but rather their state of crisis and their incapacity to respond to the people's need to “belong.” Yet a credible pan-European response to this need proceeds at an exasperatingly slow pace.

The Pollster & the Nazis

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his article, “The Pollster and the Nazis” [August 1991], Leo Bogart maintains that I was effectively a Nazi during the years between 1933 and 1945. I had just turned sixteen when Hitler came to power in January 1933. I never joined the Nazi party or the Hitler Youth, and I was never a member of any other National Socialist organization, except for the National Socialist student organization, which I joined in the summer of 1936. Mr. Bogart writes in a footnote to his article that he has been alerted to my many organizational affilia-

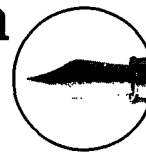
Enter a whole new world of writing pleasure...

Voyager Fountain Pen only \$49⁹⁵*

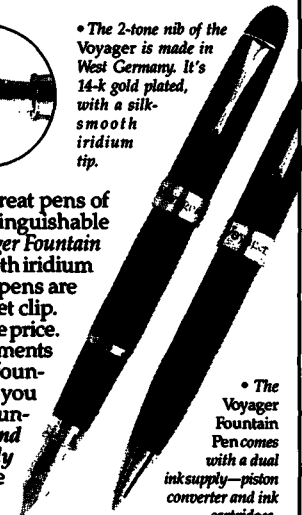
*But read this ad for an even better deal!

The Voyager line of fine pens is equal or superior to the great pens of Europe and America in function and appearance, indistinguishable in heft and feel. The German-made two-tone nib of the Voyager Fountain Pen is heavily 14-k gold-plated and provided with a silky-smooth iridium tip. Just as those fine European and American pens, Voyager pens are tastefully decorated with gold-plated applications and pocket clip.

The truly astonishing thing about the Voyager Fountain Pen is the price. We are the exclusive representatives of these fine writing instruments in the United States. We can therefore bring you this superior fountain pen for just \$49.95. Compare that to the \$150 to \$250 that you would expect to pay for equivalent U.S. or European luxury fountain pens. But we have an even better deal: Buy two for \$99.90, and we'll send you a third one, with our compliments—absolutely FREE! The Voyager companion retractable ballpoint pen is in the same luxury execution. It costs \$39.95. The “3-for-2” special deal is also available. For further substantial saving, you can buy the set—Fountain Pen and Ballpoint Pen for only \$69.95. And, of course, you can buy three sets for the price of two. Start writing with what may well be the finest writing instruments in the world, get incredible savings and order your Voyager Fountain Pen(s) today!



• The 2-tone nib of the Voyager is made in West Germany. It's 14-k gold plated, with a silky-smooth iridium tip.



• The Voyager Fountain Pen comes with a dual ink supply—piston converter and ink cartridges.

FOR FASTEST SERVICE, ORDER
TOLL FREE (800) 882-3050
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Please give order #1263B117 for Voyager Fountain Pens, #1264B117 for Voyager Ballpoint Pens, and #1265B117 for Voyager Sets (Fountain Pen and Ballpoint Pen). If you prefer, mail check or card authorization and expiration date. We need daytime phone for all orders and issuing bank for charge orders. Add ship./insur.: \$3.50 for one, \$10.50 for three pens or sets. Add sales tax for CA delivery. You have 30-day return and one-year warranty.

Looking for a bargain? Come in and visit our Catalog Outlet in San Francisco.

since 1967
haverhills®
of San Francisco

139 Townsend Street, San Francisco, CA 94107

tions. To repeat, I did not have multiple affiliations, only one.

Let me tell my story in more detail. On June 26, 1969, the founder and publisher of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ), Erich Welter, sent me a copy of a letter he had received from Washington, D.C., which read as follows:

Mr. Rosenstiel [the FAZ economic correspondent in Washington] recently had a lady from our publishers' association [the American Newspaper Publishers Association, where for many years Leo Bogart was the general manager of the Bureau of Advertising] over for dinner, who mentioned that the research people were interested in Mrs. Noelle-Neumann's past. She is said to have done something for the Ministry of Propaganda at the time. There are supposedly more recent CIA reports as well and Mrs. Noelle-Neumann will undoubtedly soon be required to make an unequivocal statement about her past activities. The whole business seemed strange to me. In the meantime, I have been to see the publishers myself and was told that the research organizations [American Association for Public Opinion Research] were not prepared to continue working with her if she did not make a satisfactory statement.

Welter also sent me the letter he wrote in response:

On the subject of Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann: her supposed Nazi past has been investigated thousands of times. There cannot possibly be anything new to be found. She was with *Das Reich* [a weekly newspaper] for a while, but nowadays only a fool would think that this could be used against her. After that, she joined the old *Frankfurter Zeitung* and was thus my colleague. There are countless people who keep trying to pin something on her, but never with any success.

This prompted me to ask all the remaining witnesses of the 30's and 40's to write down what they still remembered, and I quote from the letters below.

In connection with my being chosen in 1937 as an exchange student to the University of Missouri, Mr. Bogart writes that I was "picked on the basis of [my] superb credentials as an activist and leader of a series of Nazi youth and student organizations." But in fact I was awarded a scholarship to study at the Missouri School of Journalism due to the influence of my

dissertation adviser, Professor Emil Dovifat. On September 7, 1969, five weeks before he died, Emil Dovifat wrote me:

The one thing I know is that I certainly did not write you a reference based on your political achievement, as was commonly done later on.

Dr. Franz Weinberger, a lawyer in Munich, wrote me as follows (August 8, 1969):

As a member of the International Student Club [a club where German and foreign students could meet] in Munich in 1937, I was witness to a conversation that took place between two officials representing the district student organization in Munich. You were the subject of the conversation, i.e., the question of whether the district student organization ought to give you permission to study in the U.S. One of the two persons speaking insisted that it was general knowledge that, rather than identifying with the ideas of the Third Reich, you represented a point of view which ran counter to the National Socialist perspective.

The student leadership in Munich tried to have my scholarship for the U.S. revoked, but the University of Missouri responded that I had been accepted and was registered and that no changes could be made.

I did not report back to the student organization after returning to Germany in 1939. I have often been asked why I returned to Germany at all if I disliked the Nazis. The reason is quite clear: I was a normal young girl who wanted to go back home to her parents and boyfriend and for whom politics were not the most important thing in life.

Rather than returning to Germany from my year at an American university via the Siberian railroad, as Mr. Bogart writes, I traveled by myself to Japan, China, and Egypt, spending five months en route.

In the summer of 1939, I tried to go abroad again, this time applying for permission to study in France. To this end, I completed a questionnaire in which I emphasized my activities in the National Socialist student organization.

When the war broke out in September 1939, I immediately began writing my dissertation and finished it in three months. In the U.S., I had started working on a dissertation on the topic of "What

do American newspapers do to attract female readers?" I discovered almost immediately that George Gallup had written a dissertation on a similar topic in the late 20's. As a citizen of a totalitarian state in which public opinion was not allowed to express itself, I was enthusiastic about Gallup's method of public-opinion polling, which made public opinion visible, and so I decided to write my dissertation on this method. My adviser, Professor Dovifat, was concerned that this topic might be politically unacceptable. Therefore, I resorted to a common practice in dictatorships in such cases: including passages of propaganda in a book—especially in the first and last pages—which the author may then use to justify his work. In the Soviet Union this was called a *passepout*.

My dissertation does contain such propaganda pieces, including passages explaining how useful this method could be to the Nazis. Of course I knew that in a dictatorship, when people could be put in concentration camps for just one single word of criticism, this method of public-opinion polling could not possibly work. In fact, when I was later called to the Ministry of Propaganda in the spring of 1942 and asked to organize surveys, I was so frightened and depressed by the request—a request which I could not safely refuse—that I fell seriously ill and was hospitalized for the next three months.

Four weeks after the dissertation was published, the publisher called me to say that the book was out of print. A new printing was planned, but the Ministry of Propaganda had demanded that changes be made in the text. So I told the publisher that I would rather dispense with the second printing than make changes in the text.

Did the book mysteriously disappear from the library shelves in West Germany, as Mr. Bogart writes? It certainly did not: it is hard to find the book today, since only 2,000 copies were printed 50 years ago. But to this day I continue to list the book on my *vita*, which is certainly evidence that I have not tried to hide its existence.

In the fall of 1940, I joined the editorial staff of *Das Reich*. *Das Reich* was not Goebbels's paper, as Mr. Bogart claims: on the contrary, its editors were from Germany's best and most liberal newspapers,

which Goebbels had closed down. As far as I can recall, there was not a single party member working at the paper in 1940. I had many outstanding colleagues at *Das Reich* who opened my eyes to the crimes of the National Socialists. These journalists were neither National Socialists nor anti-Semites—they were good democrats, as described by Guenther Gillissen in his book, *The Frankfurter Zeitung in the Third Reich* (1986). After 1945, many became leading German journalists.

I had been a journalist for less than a year when I began to be persecuted. First, in the spring of 1941 I was tried before the press court, an institution established by the Nazis after they came to power in 1933, because of an article I had written describing the miserable fate of female wartime factory workers.

In the fall of 1942, I wrote an article on Franklin D. Roosevelt for *Das Reich*. Goebbels always received the first copies of each new issue. He immediately sent my editor a directive stating that the article was to be removed from *Das Reich* at once and that I was to be fired without notice. In his letter of August 22, 1969, Heinrich Scharp, the head of the Berlin editorial office of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, describes what happened next:

When Miss Noelle was dismissed without notice in the fall of 1942 from the weekly *Das Reich*, because of an article the Ministry of Propaganda took exception to, the *Frankfurter Zeitung* suggested that she join the Berlin editorial office. The negotiations had not yet been concluded when the Ministry of Propaganda discovered the plans and urged the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, to the point of issuing threats, to dispense with the services of Miss Noelle: she was said to be politically unacceptable, most particularly for the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. Thanks to personal contacts with some of the gentlemen in the German Press Section of the Ministry of Propaganda, the objections were withdrawn, although it was announced at the same time that contributions from Miss Noelle would be subject to sharp and distrustful scrutiny by the Ministry of Propaganda.

This announcement took effect when an article about Eleanor Roosevelt written by Miss Noelle and signed with her initials appeared in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* in

the spring 1943. That very same day, Erich Fischer, the head of the German Press Section of the Ministry of Propaganda, called me: I remember the exact words he used to begin the conversation, referring to the article by Miss Noelle: "*Nun ist der Bart ab*" ["That's the last straw"]. He added that the article was an inappropriate glorification of Mrs. Roosevelt, proving that the Ministry of Propaganda had been right to caution against Miss Noelle. The *Frankfurter Zeitung* should not be surprised if tough measures were now introduced with respect to both Miss Noelle and the newspaper.

The *Frankfurter Zeitung* files contain a letter of April 19, 1943 from its Berlin editor, Fritz Saenger, about a meeting with Herr Duerr, an adviser to the Ministry of Propaganda:

Duerr is responsible for the prosecution of infractions and misdemeanors. He told me that proceedings would be instituted against Miss Noelle with the aim of blacklisting her. Until the proceedings have been concluded, she will be banned from writing.

Scharp concludes: "There is no doubt that the Ministry of Propaganda was highly distrustful of and hostile to Miss Noelle."

After the *Frankfurter Zeitung* was closed down in August 1943, most of my colleagues were hired to write for other newspapers and magazines. For me, there was no way I could continue working publicly as a journalist, since I had been identified as anti-Nazi. My colleagues tried to help me and thus I was able to write anonymous feature stories on innocuous subjects such as China, London movie screenings, and the history of Pan American Airways. In 1944, I wrote an epilogue for the German translation of a novel by Benjamin Barr Lindsey entitled *Denver Chronik* (*The Beast* in English). I was able to write the epilogue only because epilogues to books were not subject to approval by the Press Department of the Ministry of Propaganda. The epilogue itself is still quite readable today, and it is a far cry from propaganda.

After the war, I was not subjected to the Allied military administration's de-Nazification process, and for a good reason. I was not a Nazi!

The Jewish Museum and
The Film Society of Lincoln Center
present

REEMERGENCE

JEWISH LIFE IN EASTERN EUROPE

A NEW INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

January 18-26, 1992

Films from the USSR, Czechoslovakia,
Hungary, and Poland

The Walter Reade Theater
at Lincoln Center
165 West 65th Street
New York City
Box Office: 212 875 5600

The Festival has been made possible by a generous grant from
The Martin and Doris Payson Charitable Foundation.

The Jewish Museum is under the auspices of
The Jewish Theological Seminary of America.



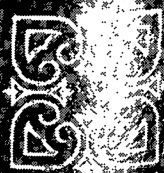
THE
JUNGLE
BOOKS



Twenty
Thousand
Leagues
Under
the Sea



JULES VERNE



Dante
THE
DIVINE
COMEDY



VANITY
FAIR



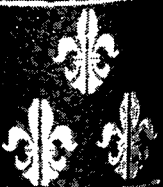
The
Canterbury
Tales

Geoffrey
Chaucer

THE
BROTHERS
KARAMZOV



THE
THREE
MUSKETEERS



DUMAS

HERMAN MELVILLE
MOBY DICK
or The Whale



Books shown
smaller than
actual size.

Own one of these leather-bound books for only \$4.95...the price of a paperback!

THE 100 GREATEST BOOKS EVER WRITTEN

The finest edition you can find of Moby Dick is the great Easton Press leather-bound edition. Now you can have this luxurious book (a wonderful value at its regular price of \$38.00) for the price of a paperback—only \$4.95—with no obligation to buy any other book. You can keep Moby Dick for \$4.95 forever!

Why is The Easton Press making this, dare we say it, whale of a deal? Because we think you'll be delighted and astonished when you see the quality of your first Easton Press leather-bound edition. When you feel the quality of the leather, and hold the heft of the book. When you look at the beauty of the binding, and see the gleam of the 22kt gold inlaid on the spine!

Frankly, we are hoping you will be so taken with this first volume that you will want to own additional leather-bound editions from The 100 Greatest Books Ever Written. But you are under no obligation to do so.

Replace those paperbacks and forgotten best sellers with leather-bound classics!

There's a time in your life when you will want to replace your paperbacks and forgotten best sellers with a library of

beautiful and important books. That's what a great library is all about...books so magnificent that they are your pride and joy...a statement about you. And a library of leather-bound books is the best of all.

Each book bound in genuine leather with accents of 22kt gold.

Real Value!

The books in this collection are a *genuine* value, not cheap reprints. Not poor-quality editions in imitation leather. Easton Press editions are the real thing. Real leather editions of the finest quality. Heirloom books elegantly bound and printed on acid-free paper so that they will last for generations.

Yet the cost is not expensive. For little more than the price of ordinary-looking hardcover books you can own these extraordinary editions — books that are admired and collected in 131 countries around the world. Books that you will be proud to display in your home — forever!

Classics by Brontë. Dickens. Dostoyevsky. Shakespeare. Twain.

Who remembers most of yesterday's best sellers? You can be sure the world will never forget the works of Shakespeare. Milton. Dostoyevsky. Dickens. Tolstoy. Twain. These are the greatest authors of all time — represented here by their greatest works! (We include a list of all the titles with your \$4.95 book; you then get to choose which books you want to receive!)

Each volume is custom-bound for you.

You don't see luxurious leather-bound books in most homes, which is all the more reason you'll be proud to see them in yours! Nor do you see these Easton Press leather editions for sale in bookstores. They are made available directly to you — with no bookstore mark-up and no distribution excesses. This is what lets us keep the price low and the quality high.

Superior craftsmanship and materials go into each Easton Press edition. Premium-quality leather. Acid-neutral paper. Gilded page ends. Satin ribbon page markers. Moiré fabric endsheets. Superb illustrations. Hubbed spines accented with precious 22kt gold.

At just \$4.95 you have nothing to lose!

Own Moby Dick for \$4.95. For the price of a paperback, own this luxurious edition outright. Then, whether you buy anything further is entirely up to you. Obviously, you get this book for a fraction of what it costs us to make. We do so in confidence that you will be truly impressed.

To take us up on this unusual opportunity, simply call us, toll free, at the number shown, or mail the reservation application below.

CALL TOLL FREE:
1-800-367-4534, Ext. 1-4535


The Easton Press

© 1991 MBI

Reservation Application

The Easton Press
47 Richards Avenue
Norwalk, Conn. 06857

Yes...send my leather-bound edition of Moby Dick for me to keep forever at just \$4.95...and reserve my subscription to The 100 Greatest Books Ever Written. If I like this book, send me further editions at the rate of one per month at \$38.00* each—with this price (\$38.00) held firm for the next two full years!

I understand you will send me a list of all the titles in the collection. I can tell you which, if any, I do not want, and I am free to tell you then to send me no further books at all if that is my decision. I may return any book within 30 days for a refund, and either party may cancel this subscription agreement at any time.

Here's how I want to pay for my \$4.95 Moby Dick and future volumes (unless I tell you to cancel):

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express ☐ Discover

Credit Card No. _____ Expiration Date _____

☐ I prefer to pay by check. (\$4.95 enclosed).

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Signature _____

All orders subject to acceptance.

*Plus \$3.45 per book for shipping and handling. Any applicable sales tax will be billed with shipment.

This publication is included in a reference system from Information Access Company in one or more of the following formats:

**CD-ROM
microfilm
online**

For information regarding availability of this publication in Information Access Company products, call toll free 800/227-8431 (U.S. only) or 415/378-5000 or send this form to:

Information Access Company
Rights & Permissions Dept.
362 Lakeside Drive
Foster City, CA 94404

Name _____
Company _____
Address _____
City _____
State/Country _____ Zip _____
Phone _____
Name of publication _____

Information Access
COMPANY

Keep the
dialogue
going...



over
Chock full o' Nuts.
THE HEAVENLY COFFEE

© 1991 Chock full o' Nuts Corp.

The official notification said: "*Nicht betroffen*"—no charge.

Finally, I was never arrested by members of the U.S. Counter-Intelligence, as Mr. Bogart writes. And I have no knowledge of my papers having been searched and of British documents marked "secret" being found in my possession. Nor did I ever work for French military intelligence.

As far as Mr. Bogart's charge of anti-Semitism is concerned, it is very unlikely that people who were opposed to the Nazis between 1933 and 1945 were anti-Semites. If I had been an anti-Semite, then I probably would have joined the Nazis. Until 1940, I was convinced that there was a strong Jewish influence on the economy and the media; this belief was widespread in Germany and also in America in the 30's. But I did *not* identify in any way with the Nazi view of Jews as *Untermenschen* (subhumans) who ultimately had to be eliminated from Europe. It is also worth noting that my writings from the time actually contain few passages dealing with Jews. This was just not a subject on which I focused a lot of attention.

The designation "Jew" following Walter Lippmann's name in my dissertation had nothing to do with anti-Semitism, but was added by my adviser in accordance with a regulation of the University of Berlin.

To the best of my knowledge, no one except Mr. Bogart (and Alphonse Silbermann of the University of Cologne) has considered me or accused me of being an anti-Semite in the course of the past 50 years. In 1953, Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, who certainly cannot be suspected of harboring an anti-Semitic colleague, asked me to become an assistant professor at their institute at the University of Frankfurt. In 1949, my institute at Allensbach conducted the first survey of anti-Semitism in Germany on our own initiative. We believed that knowing the degree of anti-Semitism in Germany would be important in the fight against it. Since then, the Allensbach Institute has conducted many surveys of anti-Semitism. The one cited by Mr. Bogart as something very sinister and evidence of anti-Semitism was commissioned by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith in New York. During the 80's, I lectured twice in Israel and was most recently invited to speak there in 1990.

Why did I write the article Mr. Bogart cites from the June 8, 1941 issue of *Das Reich*? Many people who live in democracies and who have never experienced life in a dictatorship believe that in a dictatorship, when there is no freedom of the press, one should not work as a journalist at all. But people who actually *live* in a dictatorship see it differently. Starved for information, the people learn to read between the lines, searching for at least a few bits of the truth. My colleagues and I tried to give them as much information as possible. But there was a high price to pay. I am not referring to my personal jeopardy, which was extreme, with the threat of being put in a concentration camp always hanging over my head, but to the conditions under which journalists were compelled to work. A journalist had to use National Socialist phrases: it was a tradeoff.

The Ministry of Propaganda regularly demanded articles on certain topics, and there was no way one could refuse to carry out these directives. When a directive came in the spring of 1941 ordering that an article against the Jews be written, I was assigned to do it. In the end, the article consisted of about 3,000 words describing the American media system with as much factual information as possible; yet it contained only one passage of about 100 words which were anti-Semitic, in line with the directive from the Ministry of Propaganda. This is the passage that Mr. Bogart cites, although he does not quote it correctly: the first sentence of the Bogart quotation is not contained in my article. I do not think there is any way I could have said *less* in an article which was officially ordered to be anti-Semitic. I would certainly have preferred not to have written these sentences at all, since I was not anti-Semitic at the time and am not an anti-Semite today. I am terribly sorry if any hurt was caused by what I wrote 50 years ago. I certainly can say that when I wrote the passage at that time I had no intention of doing any harm to the Jews. And there is also clear evidence that much of what I wrote enraged the Ministry of Propaganda to such a degree that they tried to silence me by all means. Would they have done this if my writing had not been considered to be threatening to the Nazis?

There is one terrible sentence in Mr. Bogart's article: "Noelle is well

beyond the possibility of destruction." Why—50 years later—should Mr. Bogart want to destroy someone whom the Nazis had wanted to destroy?

My friend Helen Dinerman, the person for whom the annual award of the World Association for Public Opinion Research is named—a prize I was awarded in 1990—told me in the early 70's that she had had many sleepless nights over Leo Bogart's unfair attacks on me. She had tried in vain to persuade him to stop mobilizing the members of the American Association of Public Opinion Research against me.

In a way, I am grateful to COMMENTARY for giving me this opportunity to present the true picture. I certainly prefer to have an article such as Mr. Bogart's published now during my lifetime rather than posthumously, when I would no longer be able to respond to it.

The terrible events of the Holocaust may make it difficult for those who live in democracies to understand those who lived in this dictatorship. With civilized people everywhere, I have been anguished by the suffering of the Jews in Germany during the Nazi regime. The burden of the Holocaust will be with me my whole life.

ELISABETH NOELLE-NEUMANN
Allensbach am Bodensee
Germany

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Leo Bogart's criticisms of Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann need qualification. Her book, *The Spiral of Silence*, is more than a restatement of the "bandwagon effect," as Mr. Bogart writes. In a field of scholarly inquiry not known for concern with social and political theory, it stands out for its effort to incorporate the theory of elites and mass society into the study of public opinion. Like other chastened and sobered postwar German conservatives such as Helmut Schelsky, as well as American liberal intellectuals of the 1950's, Dr. Noelle-Neumann's approach is in the tradition of democratic pessimism in which loyalty to democracy is combined with concern about mass participation and the malleability of the masses. . . . *The Spiral of Silence* offers a stimulating focus for debate about what public opinion is and how it is shaped by journalists and politicians.

As to Dr. Noelle-Neumann's political activities during the Nazi

years, Mr. Bogart is certainly right to ask "should one expect anything less" from Dr. Noelle-Neumann than from the authors of *The God That Failed* or from Hitler's architect and aide, Albert Speer (though Speer's memoirs had their own self-serving qualities as well)? As Jerry Z. Muller has shown in his very important study, *The Other God That Failed: Hans Freyer and the Deradicalization of German Conservatism*, some "deradicalized" intellectuals drawn to National Socialism in the 1920's and 1930's, such as Hans Freyer and Helmut Schelsky, without commenting on their own political pasts, made valuable contributions to the intellectual revival of liberal democratic traditions. They stood in contrast to other ex-Nazis and fellow travelers, such as Martin Heidegger and Carl Schmitt, who publicly neither discussed their Nazi past nor stressed the value of liberal democracy after 1945. Dr. Noelle-Neumann, a student and beginning journalist in the Nazi years, and a

generation younger than Freyer and Schelsky, like them, made important contributions to the emergence of liberal democracy in postwar West Germany. Mr. Bogart is right to criticize the refusal of these intellectuals to reflect on their public activities during the Nazi era. It was a grave political and moral error, one which weakened rather than strengthened the moral foundations of democracy in postwar West Germany, and which deepened the generation gap which Dr. Noelle-Neumann herself has extensively documented.

Dr. Noelle-Neumann has focused her efforts on measuring the political pulse of the Germans, including the strength of Nazism, anti-Semitism, Communism, neutralism, the United States, liberal democracy, and Israel. The polling data accumulated by the Allensbach Institute (much of it now available at the Roper Institute for Public Opinion Research at the University of Connecticut) remain an indispensable source of infor-

"They couldn't believe an American actually spoke their language."

Berlitz makes it surprisingly easy to learn another language with Think and Talk®.

For just \$155 (plus \$10 shipping & handling), you get 7 audiocassettes, 2 illustrated manuals, a bilingual dictionary plus an exclusive Berlitz electronic interpreter (\$99 value) that translates 12,500 words between English, Spanish, French, German and Italian.

And if you're not speaking a foreign language fluently in 30 days, we'll give you your money back. No questions asked.

Think and Talk®
Now on audiocassette in:
Spanish,
French,
German,
Italian,
Advanced Spanish
& Advanced French.

FREE!
5-language
Interpreter.
\$99. Value
with order.

1-800-392-3500 Ask for Dept. 2926

—BERLITZ

The foreign language experts.

Berlitz Publishing Company, P.O. Box 305, 900 Chester Ave., Delran, NJ 08075

• SEPTEMBER GIFT • OCTOBER GIFT • NOVEMBER GIFT • DECEMBER GIFT •

• AUGUST GIFT •
**GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS
TO COMMENTARY!**
• JULY GIFT •

This holiday season give the best ideas in America...

The perfect gift for inquiring minds

Think of all the discerning people you know who would enjoy receiving a gift subscription to COMMENTARY. Friends. New grads. Colleagues. It's easy. All you do is send in the coupon attached at the right to COMMENTARY by January 31, 1992 to take advantage of our exceptional holiday offer.

Save with our holiday subscription rate

We'll send 12 monthly issues for the preferred subscription rate of only \$39—that's 13% off the cover price.
Each additional gift is just \$33.

Your gift arrives with a personal touch

A distinctive card will be enclosed to announce your gift, and the recipient will be reminded of your generosity every month for an entire year. What could be more thoughtful...
and more appreciated!

Get your holiday giving under way now

Send Commentary to all your special people. Just fill out and return your gift coupon today. We do all the rest!

Remember, these holiday rates expire January 31, 1992.

For fastest service, call now toll-free

(800) 829-6270

Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Commentary

the provocative, challenging, and enlightening gift that will last all year long.

• JANUARY GIFT • FEBRUARY GIFT • MARCH GIFT • APRIL GIFT • MAY GIFT • JUNE GIFT • JULY GIFT •

• JANUARY GIFT • FEBRUARY GIFT • MARCH GIFT • APRIL GIFT • MAY GIFT •

• JUNE GIFT • JULY GIFT • AUGUST GIFT • SEPTEMBER GIFT • OCTOBER GIFT • NOVEMBER GIFT • DECEMBER GIFT •

mation for anyone doing research on public opinion in postwar Germany. Dr. Noelle-Neumann has, in fact, been most helpful to a number of us who have worked on the political culture of postwar West Germany. Perhaps now she, and other members of her generation, will undertake some long overdue self-reflection. Her own silence about her political youth, regrettable as it was, should not obscure the fact that after 1945 a chastened and wiser Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann kept a close watch on the persistence of anti-Semitism and made a valuable contribution to the growth of tolerance and the emergence of democracy in West Germany.

JEFFREY HERF
German Historical Institute
Washington, D.C.

LEO BOGART writes:

I agree with Jeffrey Herf that polls, in Germany as elsewhere, serve the cause of democracy. That presumes the moral integrity of those who conduct them.

Until now, Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann has stonewalled her German critics, rejecting inquiries into her past as "sickly bad form." Her letter represents, to my knowledge, the first public acknowledgment of her Nazi writings and her first public expression of regret over the mass murder of the Jews. What is missing, however, is the admission that what she wrote is what she thought. Instead, she presents herself as a victim, first of the Nazi Ministry of Propaganda, and now of the persecutors who confront her with her own past utterances. She fails to grasp that what is at issue is *not* what she once said or did, but her refusal to admit that her anti-Semitic writings reflected her genuine convictions rather than mere opportunism. Thus she can deny responsibility for the events that inevitably followed from the flow of evil words to which she contributed.

Dr. Noelle-Neumann has said that her Nazi writings represented youthful folly; by her account, she was twenty-eight when the war ended. But many of the most shocking war crimes were committed by men who, like her, were in their twenties. Whatever the explanation of her past behavior, what matters is her present lack of candor about it. If Dr. Noelle-Neumann was only following orders, as she claims, her age was irrelevant. No one was

required to write Nazi propaganda.

Dr. Noelle-Neumann refers to her de-Nazification certificate of July 12, 1950. In receiving this absolution she joined such notables as the man who organized university book-burnings in 1933 and another who designed concentration camps. Although she now claims affiliation with only one Nazi student organization, Richard Albrecht, a German journalist, has uncovered her résumé, dated June 12, 1939, which lists membership in: the National Women's Student Union of Munich (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft Nationaler Studentinnen*), where she was cell-block leader; the district Student Leadership Organization in Berlin (*Gaustudentenfuehrung*); the National Socialist German Student Union (*Nationalsozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund*), and the National Socialist Student Mobilization for the Struggle (*Nationalsozialistische Studentenkampfhilfe*).

Like the proverbial case of *Pravda* quoting *Izvestia*, she offers references from the likes of her mentor, Emil Dovifat (who so considerably added the term "Jew" to Walter Lippmann's name in her book). In 1937, when she was his student, Dovifat wrote:

Out of a ripe understanding of the people and of human beings, and unique success in leading the people and the masses, Adolf Hitler has given practical form to fundamental principles, the principles of propaganda. . . . The political concept that Adolf Hitler has given is very enlightening for the mission of newspapers.

Dr. Noelle-Neumann does not touch upon the propaganda aspect of her year abroad, but in their 1943 study, *The Nazi Propaganda Machine*, Derrick Sington and Arthur Weidenfeld note her "tendency to write frequent articles defending and eulogizing National Socialism for the college magazine." They cite a New York Times dispatch of August 27, 1937, describing

a mobilization . . . of all German "exchange students" who were about to leave for universities abroad. Dr. Burmeister, the director of the Academic Exchange Service, addressing the students, had told them that they were an important element of Germany's foreign propaganda. This mobilization had come as a climax to a year's special ideological training.

As a graduate student in journal-

ism at the University of Missouri, Dr. Noelle-Neumann fulfilled her mission zealously. In an article in the *Columbia Missourian* (November 24, 1937), she wrote:

In Germany after the war about 70-90 percent of the key positions in medicine, law, the press, the theater, and a large part of government positions were in the hands of the Jews. . . . National Socialism is opposed to the mixture of races . . . since history offers sufficient examples that the downfall of great nations set in with the mixing of races.

Dr. Noelle-Neumann spent the winter holidays of her year abroad at a Florida fruit farm. She asserts in a letter written in 1970 that she went "exclusively in order to celebrate Christmas and New Year and to get to know Florida . . . and that this Christmas meeting was a longstanding tradition among German exchange students which had already been established long before the National Socialists seized power." This meeting was organized by the Nazis.

Though desperately impatient to get home to her loved ones when the academic year ended, she found time for a five-month odyssey through Japan and Japanese-occupied China a year after the rape of Nanking and while Europe itself was boiling on the edge of war. It is as hard to imagine that this trip had no political purpose as it is to accept her report that she wrote a doctoral dissertation of several hundred pages in three months.

In 1940, Dr. Noelle-Neumann described the functions of *Das Reich* by quoting the Nazi ideologue Fritz List on the important "state-political mission of the National Socialist press." *Das Reich* was not Goebbels's paper, she says, but *all* papers in Germany were Goebbels's. (He even personally directed which recipes were to be broadcast on the radio.) China, London movie screenings, the history of Pan American Airways were never "innocuous subjects" in the wartime Nazi press, where every word served an ideological purpose.

Das Reich's historian, Harry Pross, describes it as "an instrument of seduction, intended to nourish illusions," founded at the time of the conquest of France to celebrate the idea of a Greater Germany. Beneath its refined veneer, it was a Nazi rag like all the rest. As

You deserve a factual look at...

Those "West Bank" Settlements

Are they really the "greatest obstacle to peace"

Not too long ago, our Secretary of State James Baker made the astonishing comment that Israeli settlements in Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") were the greatest obstacle to peace in the Middle East. Could Mr. Baker possibly be right? It's a serious accusation and it deserves examination.

What are the facts?

■ In order to gain perspective, some thumbnail history may be in order. Large numbers of Jews have been living in these territories since biblical times – without interruption. Most of the Arabs living there are in fact relative newcomers. "Palestine" is the entire area now covered by Israel, including Judea/Samaria (the so-called "West Bank") and what is now the Kingdom of Jordan. It originally also included the Golan Heights, which later, in an agreement between England and France, were ceded to France, and to Syria as the successor in possession. In 1922, contrary to the requirements of the League of Nations Mandate, the British severed the entire area east of the Jordan River and gave it to the Hashemites as reward for their assistance in World War I. Thus, fully 75% of Palestine, all of which under the Mandate and under the terms of the Balfour Declaration was meant to be a homeland for the Jewish people, was lost for that purpose. Only the area west of the Jordan River was left for Jewish settlement.

■ In 1947, after decades of strife between Arabs and Jews, the British decided that they had enough and announced that they would relinquish the Mandate. The United Nations stepped in and proposed a partition plan under which the country (west of the River) was to be divided into respective Arab and Jewish areas. Jerusalem was to be an internationalized city. The Jews accepted the plan; the Arabs refused it out of hand. In 1948, on the twice truncated territory allot-

ted to them by the United Nations, the Jews declared their independence, and the state of Israel was born. On the same day, six Arab armies invaded the new-born state. In what can be described as an almost biblical miracle, the Jews defeated the six Arab armies. When an armistice was finally secured, however, TransJordan remained in possession of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") and the eastern part of Jerusalem; Egypt remained in possession of the Gaza Strip. TransJordan promptly renamed itself Jordan.

■ Once in possession of the "West Bank" and East Jerusalem, the Jordanians promptly proceeded to expel all Jews and systematically to desecrate and to destroy most Jewish sacred places, cemeteries and houses of worship. No Jews, regardless of whether they were Israelis, Americans or citizens of any other country, were allowed into the "West Bank" or East Jerusalem, the locale of the Western Wall, the holiest site in Judaism. In 1967, Abdel Nasser of Egypt, joined by the same array of Arab armies that had tried to destroy Israel in 1948, launched another war against Israel "to drive the Jews into the sea" and into oblivion, once and for all. The Israelis pre-empted and utterly defeated the combined Arab might in the 6-Day War, one of the greatest military victories in history. When the dust of war settled, the Israelis had not only retained their national territory, but had repossessed (not occupied) the territories of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank"), the eastern part of Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and the vast Sinai Peninsula.

It is clear from this abbreviated history that the Israeli claim to the "West Bank" is at least as strong as that of the Arabs. It's only by dint of constant repetition that the world has come to think of these territories as "occupied Arab land". About 100,000 Jews now live in these territories. And why shouldn't they? Why should the Arab countries and the "West Bank" be the only places in the whole wide world where Jews are not allowed to live? How can 100,000 Jews living among 700,000 Arabs be the "greatest threat to peace"? How can Secretary Baker get so exercised and consider a new settlement of a few mobile homes on some barren Judean hills as the "greatest threat to peace", when he seems to be oblivious and totally unconcerned about the unrelenting hostility of the Arab countries, the de facto incorporation of Lebanon by Syria, the Scuds and chemical weapons still remaining in Iraq, and the relentless and ominous build-up of Syria's missile forces?

This ad has been published and paid for by

FLAME

Facts and Logic About the Middle East

P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco, CA 94159

FLAME is a tax-exempt, non-profit educational 501(c)(3) organization. Its purpose is the research and publication of the facts regarding developments in the Middle East and exposing false propaganda that might harm the interests of the United States and its allies in that area of the world. Your tax-deductible contributions are welcome. They enable us to pursue these goals and to publish these messages in national magazines and metro newspapers. We have virtually no overhead. Almost all of our revenue pays for our educational work, for these clarifying messages, and related direct mail.

YES, I want to help in the publication of these ads and in clarifying the situation in the Middle East. I include my tax-deductible contribution in the amount of

\$ _____ C/38

☐ My contribution is in the amount of \$50 or more. Please send me your booklet containing 24 of the ads that you have published in national media over the last few years.

My name is _____

I live at _____

In _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail to: FLAME, P.O. Box 590359, San Francisco, CA 94159

an example, a photograph of a gaggle of stormtroopers in full regalia, led by Rudolf Hess and Alfred Rosenberg (the party's chief exponent of racial theory), fills half of the front page of a section on "Literature/Art/Science."

For Dr. Noelle-Neumann to argue that only a small part of her article in *Das Reich* on U.S. media was anti-Semitic is like noting that "Jew" is only a small fraction of the word-count in *Mein Kampf*. She still does not seem to understand that the Nazi ideology she expounded was nauseating in its fundamental view of human beings, of which anti-Semitism was only one aspect. (On one point Dr. Noelle-Neumann is correct: the first sentence I quoted from her *Das Reich* diatribe was actually the caption of the cartoon mentioned in the article; an intervening sentence of my text was deleted in the editing.)

As for the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, Guenther Gillesen reports that it courageously limited its anti-Semitic invective to the news columns, and did not intrude it into the cultural affairs magazine. Dr. Noelle-Neumann has referred to it as "the strongest oppositionist newspaper." The real oppositionists in wartime Germany ended up on meathooks.

The "tactless glorification" of Eleanor Roosevelt, for which Dr. Noelle-Neumann was fired from her job at the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, could not have been more tactless in 1943 than her description in *Das Reich* in 1940, before Germany declared war on the United States: "In her daily newspaper articles Mrs. Roosevelt has for years tried to convert public opinion to the Jewish point of view." Gillesen describes her later article as "no flattering portrait. The author did not conceal her revulsion." However, it was apparently not sufficiently venomous to meet the expected standards, as in the case of her earlier piece about FDR, which criticized him in terms that the guardians of the press considered too abstract, and therefore susceptible to misinterpretation. Was this because she was deliberately conveying subversive Aesopian sentiments? That would have been utterly inconsistent with her previous record.

Dr. Noelle-Neumann refers to her "still quite readable" epilogue to a new translation of Benjamin Barr Lindsey's 1910 novel, *The*

Beast, only because Richard Albrecht has cited it to dispute her contention that she was banned from work as a writer in 1943. (Although Dr. Noelle-Neumann describes herself as having been banned from employment, the measure taken against her was apparently not quite a ban [*Berufsverbot*] but rather a disciplinary action [*Berufsgerichtsverfahren* in the ineffable Third Reich jargon]). Lindsey's novel was published for propaganda purposes in 1944 at a time of severe paper shortages. Dr. Noelle-Neumann portrayed it as an exposé of how America was a "pseudo-democracy," in the grip of "the money powers" and perhaps ripe for revolution. At this same time, her husband (co-founder of the Al lensbach Institute, Erich Peter Neumann) was the chief propaganda aide of the *Gauleiter* of Dresden (known as "King Mu").

Finally, on the matter of Dr. Noelle-Neumann's postwar encounter with the U.S. Army's Counter-Intelligence Corps (CIC), Frederick W. Williams, Jr., who directed opinion research for the U.S. Military Government, has written me that in the spring of 1946, she came to his office to apply for a position. Williams writes that after noticing "the unmistakable special red color of a SECRET stamp on a document" contained in her purse, he asked her to leave in the custody of a CIC officer. He adds that "CIC reported to [him] the next morning that [she] did indeed have classified British document(s) in her possession and that they detained her."

The wartime anti-Semitic drivel of another young journalist, Paul

de Man, shocking as it is, may have little direct pertinence to his subsequent writings as an eminent literary critic. In Dr. Noelle-Neumann's case, her activities as a Nazi propagandist go right to the heart of her life's work as a student of the mass media and their effects on public opinion.

Did the Nazis really ever commit mass murder? There are those who say no. Himmler, before he took the fatal pill, denied to a representative of the World Jewish Congress that Jews had been exterminated and complained of "distorted" reports about the concentration camps. ("They should have been called 'reformatories,'" he said.) Similarly, Goering told an American military interrogator that he had never seen a concentration camp and was himself a victim of fascism, "condemned to death by Hitler." In April 1945, as a U.S. soldier, I briefly had in my custody an SS general who described himself to me as an innocent "policeman." Rewriting personal history is the first step in the revision of history.

Gulag Story

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

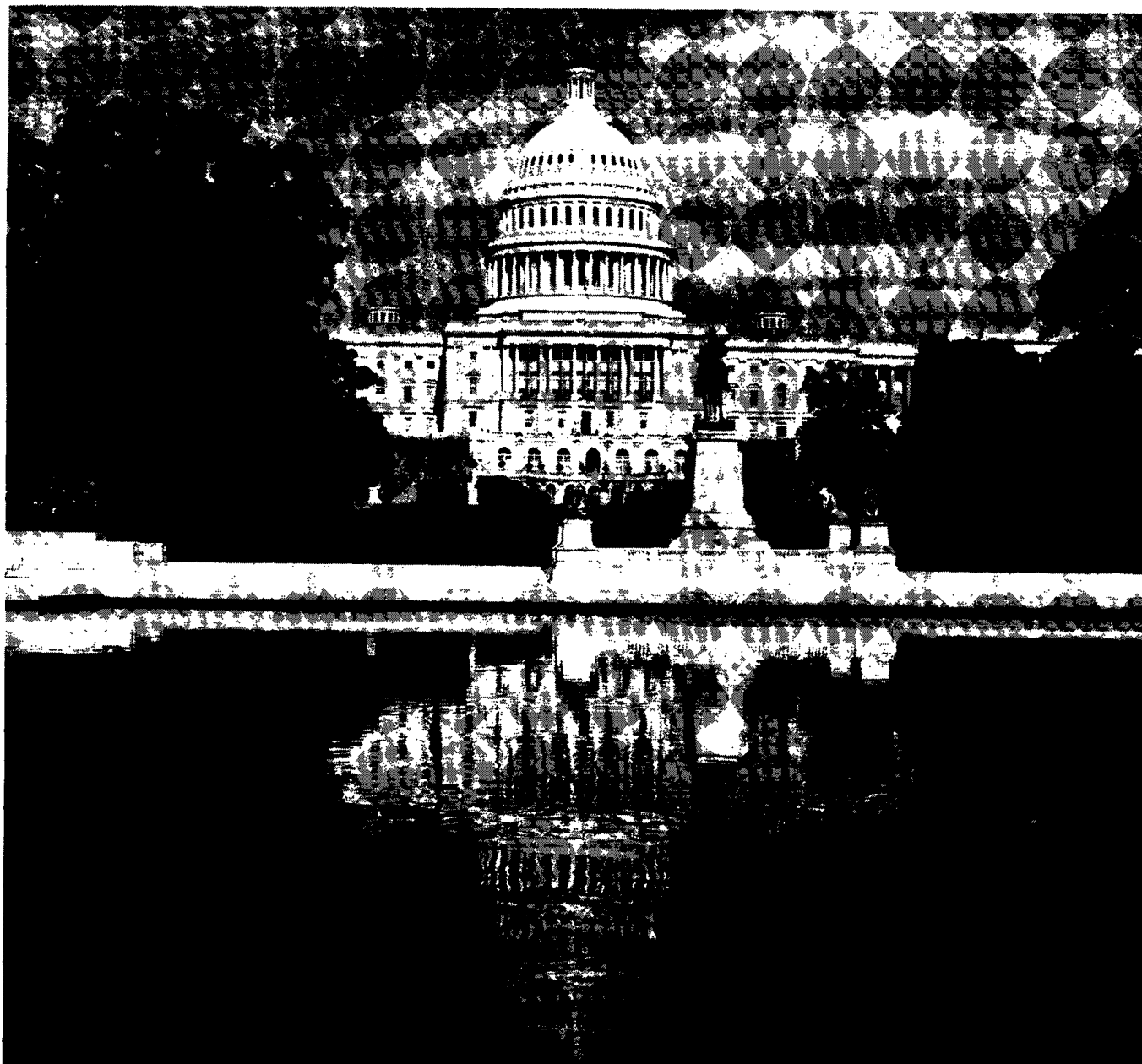
In his excellent review of David Evanier's black comedy, *Red Love* [Books in Review, September 1991], Arch Puddington mentions a character named Antonio Carelli. The Carelli character appears to have been based on an actual person, Thomas Sgovio, who told his story in his little-known book, *Dear America! Why I Turned Against Communism* (Partners' Press, 1979). Sgovio grew up in Buffalo, New York. His father was

a full-time Communist organizer and young Sgovio was an active Young Communist (arrested twice for street demonstrations). His father, an unnaturalized immigrant, was deported to the Soviet Union in the early 1930's after disrupting a Buffalo city council meeting, and Thomas Sgovio, still a teenager, followed him there.

After several years of privileged treatment as refugees from capitalist oppression, Sgovio and his father fell victim to Stalin's purges. Their arrest was part of the 1937-38 Yezhov purge that swept up many foreign Communists like the Sgovios, as well as Soviet citizens with foreign contacts (such as those who had relatives living abroad), stamp collectors who corresponded with foreign philatelists, and even students of Esperanto.

Sgovio was sent to the labor camps of the Kolyma gold-mining region in Siberia, among the worst the gulag had to offer. He attributes his survival in part to an artistic talent that allowed him to earn extra food and less taxing conditions by selling drawings and paintings to guards and the better-treated criminal prisoners. The book describes the horrifying conditions of the Kolyma camps and is illustrated with some of the drawings Sgovio made at the time. He also mentions the names of American radicals he came across in Moscow or in the gulag, noting the deaths of a number of them. In 1946 Sgovio was released, but later rearrested and rusticated to a Siberian lumbering region until 1954. In 1963 he was able to leave the Soviet Union and return to the U.S.

JOHN E. HAYNES
Wheaton, Maryland



If you knew what they know, would you do what they do?

More than any other single force on earth, America's foreign policy will determine what kind of world we and our children live in.

And every one of us can influence that policy. That's what the nonprofit, nonpartisan Foreign Policy Association is all about: working to develop the kind of informed public opinion that will help our government make enlightened, responsible foreign policy decisions.

Last year alone, more than 250,000 Americans across the nation—in discussion

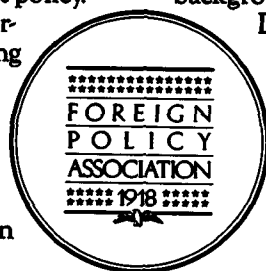
groups, classrooms and community centers—participated in our *Great Decisions* program.

The *Great Decisions* book provides objective background on eight key foreign policy issues.

Discussions help you form your views; you express them on opinion ballots, which FPA presents to Washington officials.

To find out more, call us now at (212) 764-4050. Or write to Foreign Policy Association, Department A, 729 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019.

Donations are tax deductible.



America and Israel: An Ominous Change

Norman Podhoretz

HAS there been a change in American policy toward Israel since the Bush administration took office? To many observers, the answer to that question is so self-evidently yes that even asking it seems foolish or disingenuous. Yet according to the line coming out of Washington, if anything is self-evident it is that no substantive change has taken place at all. The United States, we are told in official statements and in private assurances, is still committed to the same goals it has always pursued. Thanks to the Gulf War, however, a new opportunity to realize those goals has presented itself and—here is the only difference—the Bush administration has moved with unprecedented determination and skill to take advantage of it.

In making this case, the Bush administration and its apologists point to a number of continuities with past American policy. Take, for example, the most visibly contentious problem in the recent relations between the American and Israeli governments—the issue of Jewish settlements in what Jerusalem calls the “administered” territories of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District and what Washington calls the “occupied” West Bank and Gaza. The administration and its apologists say, accurately, that George Bush’s opposition to the building of such settlements is consistent with the stand of his predecessors, both Republican and Democratic, all the way back to Lyndon Johnson, who was in the White House when Israel first conquered these territories in the Six-Day War of 1967.

How indeed, they ask, could it have been otherwise? After all, in helping to draft and then basing its policy on Security Council Resolution 242 of 1967, the Johnson administration clearly and explicitly contemplated an eventual Israeli withdrawal to the boundaries which had defined the Jewish state before the Six-Day War. To be sure, allowance was made for minor adjustments that would enhance the security of those boundaries, which meant that Jewish settlements serving a clearly defensive military purpose (along the lines of the Allon plan) could perhaps be justified

in American eyes. But any other Jewish settlements, and especially those built in densely populated areas, were always anathema to the United States, suggesting as they did that the Israelis might be sneakily engaged in a policy of creeping annexation.

LENDING credence to this reading, Lyndon Johnson’s Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, recently described an exchange he recalls having had in the aftermath of the Six-Day War with Abba Eban, who was then Israel’s Foreign Minister. According to Rusk, Eban told him that even though Israel had always assured the United States it had no expansionist ambitions—assurances which the United States had in good faith passed on to the Arabs—the Israelis had now changed their minds, thereby (in Rusk’s words) making “a 20-year liar out of the United States.”

Whether or not Rusk’s memory of Eban’s statement is accurate—and I must say that it rings wrong to me—it shows that even in an administration as friendly to Israel as Johnson’s, there was a strong animus against any hint of an Israeli right to settle in, let alone to exercise sovereignty over, any of the territories that had been taken by Israel in the Six-Day War: the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan; the Sinai desert and the Gaza Strip from Egypt; and the Golan Heights from Syria.

If, the apologists for Bush continue, this was so under Johnson, it was all the more evident in the administration of his Republican successor, Richard Nixon. Attempting to pursue a more “evenhanded” policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict than the Democrats had supposedly done, Nixon’s first Secretary of State, William P. Rogers, proposed a plan that was based on much the same conception of “trading land for peace” as is now shaping policy under the Bush administration (though the land in question then included the Sinai desert, as well as all the territories still in contention today).

Furthermore, the Bush apologists say, when the Democrats, under Jimmy Carter, returned to the White House in 1976, it became obvious that “evenhandedness” was no longer a Republican

monopoly. Both Carter's Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, and his National Security Adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, were firm believers in the need to push Israel back to the '67 borders (again, with minor modifications). And it was during the Carter administration that a first large move was made in that direction, with Israel's return of the Sinai to Egypt under the Camp David accords of 1978. Yet far from being satisfied with this achievement, Carter and his advisers grew almost as angry with Menachem Begin over the issue of settlements on the West Bank and in Gaza as Bush and his people would later be with Begin's successor as Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Shamir.

Finally, we are reminded, even under Ronald Reagan, who by general agreement was the friendliest to Israel of any American President ever, the United States went on objecting to the building of new Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. True, the Reagan administration quietly dropped the dubious charges that the settlements were illegal under international law and also an "obstacle" to peace, but it still characterized them as "unhelpful." Not only that, but the so-called Reagan plan (which was actually developed by his Secretary of State, George Shultz) represented an updated version of the "territory-for-peace" approach of the Rogers plan. While it, too, foundered on the rock of resistance from the parties—in this instance, the Syrians turning out to be the main obstacle—Bush and his apologists can still cite it as yet another precedent for their own policy.

But what about the extraordinary level of pressure the Bush administration has exerted, most notably in trying to force Israeli compliance with American conditions for a peace conference, and with the American wish for a freeze on settlements, by delaying a previously promised loan guarantee needed by Israel to house Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union? Here too, the Bush apologists reply, there are precedents. For example, Nixon once held up a promised delivery of Phantom jets to Israel and—even more to the point—just before the futile Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East of 1973, he threatened to postpone an aid package "as insurance of Israel's good behavior."^{*}

ALL this is true, but it is also misleading. For the deeper truth is that a change *has* taken place in the treatment of Israel by the United States.

To begin with, there is a new tone in the air. It is a tone ranging from ordinary coldness to the outright hostility that was so vividly manifested in the President's notorious press conference of September 12, 1991, at which Bush described himself as "one lonely little guy" up against "something like a thousand lobbyists on the Hill" working to prevent him from postponing the loan

guarantee for 120 days. For thus playing into the canard that our alliance with Israel is based on the illegitimate manipulation of domestic politics by an all-powerful Jewish lobby, the lonely little guy won his delay. But he also called forth an avalanche of congratulatory mail so virulently anti-Semitic that it reportedly caused him to regret his use of this squalid tactic.

There was, however, no indication that the President regretted another statement he made in that press conference which was in some ways even worse. It was this:

Just months ago, American men and women in uniform risked their lives to defend Israelis in the face of Iraqi Scud missiles, and indeed, Desert Storm, while winning a war against aggression, also achieved the defeat of Israel's most dangerous adversary.

Now, as George Bush well knew when he made that statement, the Israelis have never asked Americans or anyone else to defend them; all they have ever asked for is help in equipping their own people to defend themselves. If things were different in the Gulf War, it was because, and only because, Bush himself forcibly prevented the Israelis, who were chafing at the bit, from assuming direct responsibility for their own defense against the Scud attacks.

The Israelis were eager to get into the war for three reasons. First, as a matter of national self-respect, they did not want American soldiers shedding blood on their behalf. Second, they were afraid that their passivity in the face of these attacks would undermine the deterrent effect of their longstanding policy of retaliation. And third, they believed—with good cause, given the specialized training their bomber pilots get to execute just such missions†—that they themselves could have done a better job of eliminating the Scuds than was done by the U.S. and its coalition partners.

Knowing all this, George Bush still insisted on holding the Israelis back, supposedly on the theory that their entry would drive out at least some of the Arab members of the anti-Iraq coalition. Yet he must also have known that the Egyptians, the Saudis, the Kuwaitis, and even the Syrians, the most anti-Israel of the Arab states in the coalition, had indicated, not once but several times, that they would stay put if Israel were to take defensive retaliatory action against Iraq. Why then was Bush so adamant about keeping Israel out? Some Israelis were derided at the time for the

^{*} The words are Henry Kissinger's, describing Nixon's motive. Kissinger, who was then Secretary of State, opposed the measure because he was "convinced that desperation would make the Israelis more defiant," and it was finally dropped.

† For details, see my "In Israel, With Scuds and Patriots" in COMMENTARY, April 1991.

“paranoid” suspicion that, as a way of exerting pressure, he was planning to throw it up to them in due course that Americans had risked their lives in order to defend Israel. But it is these “paranoid” Israelis and not their critics who have turned out to be right.

The worst of it from the Israeli point of view was that the United States, far from eliminating the Iraqi missile threat, had failed to locate most of the Scud launchers during the war and had succeeded mainly in destroying decoys. Last October, therefore, finding themselves vulnerable once again in case of a renewal of hostilities, and now having doubly good cause not to rely on us for their defense, the Israelis undertook a series of reconnaissance flights over Iraq. In response, Iraq protested to the United Nations, at which point the White House, instead of dismissing this as a piece of arrant *chutzpah*, expressed its “concern about the Israeli overflights . . . to the Israeli government at the highest level.” These overflights, explained the President’s spokesman, might “disrupt the peace process,” and besides they were unnecessary because the United States was already providing Israel with intelligence on Iraq. Yet in view of the very fact that Iraq emerged from the war with so many Scud launchers and missiles intact, the Israelis might be forgiven for doubting that American intelligence is all that it should be in this field or all that is needed to keep Israel secure.

As if this were not enough, the Bush administration shortly thereafter let it be known that it objected to yet another job of surveillance the Israelis had undertaken, this one of a North Korean ship carrying arms—reportedly they were Scud-C missiles with a range of 600 km.—to Syria. “After having failed to destroy Iraqi missile sites aimed at Israel,” an Israeli official commented with understandable bitterness, “America is now extending protection to Syria to set up more accurate and powerful missiles even closer to Israel.”

IN ADDITION to setting a new tone in its relations with Israel, the Bush administration has gone beyond any of its predecessors in the intensity of its preoccupation with the Arab-Israeli conflict. It is, indeed, a preoccupation that seems to border on the obsessive. Thus, at a moment when Saddam Hussein was massacring Kurds and Shiites in one part of the Middle East, the American Secretary of State was spending all his time in a different part of the region where nothing much was going on, shuttling back and forth among Jerusalem, Amman, Damascus, and Riyadh. It was as if, with a conflagration raging in upper Manhattan, the fire department were to send all its trucks to put out a smoldering little blaze in Brooklyn. Nor did such side events as the break-up of the Soviet empire and the collapse of Communism within the Soviet heartland distract

Baker’s attention from what he clearly considered a more important priority.

Not only is there a whiff of the obsessive in the Bush administration’s preoccupation with the Arab-Israeli conflict, there is also a touch of irrationality in its determination to bring about a resolution. Before the end of the cold war, it was often argued that the United States had a vital interest in peace between the Arabs and Israel because any outbreak of hostilities could lead to a confrontation with the Soviet Union which might even escalate into a nuclear war. With the end of the cold war, however, the idea of the Arab-Israeli conflict as a tinderbox or a flashpoint has become obsolete. Yet the Bush administration goes on treating the conflict as though it were still as globally dangerous as ever.

Unlike the tinderbox theory, which once seemed reasonable but has been overtaken by events, the notion that settling the Palestinian problem is in the vital interest of the United States never made any sense. Here the argument has been that the Palestinian problem is the “key” to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and as such the main source of instability in a region which is strategically crucial to the United States. Yet the war against the Jewish state was launched by the Arabs long before the existence of a distinct Palestinian nationality was recognized even by the Arab world itself. Nor, during the nineteen years of Jordanian control of the West Bank, did anyone speak of establishing an independent Palestinian state there.

The plain truth is that the Arab-Israeli conflict has from the beginning been rooted in the refusal of the Arab peoples to accept the existence of a sovereign Jewish state in “their” part of the world, no matter where its boundaries might be drawn and irrespective of what its policies might or might not be. Hence the Palestinian problem cannot be the “key” to that conflict (unless this is a coded way of saying, as the Palestine National Covenant still explicitly does, that the only “solution” would be the establishment of Palestinian control not just over the West Bank and Gaza but over the entire territory now under Jewish sovereignty—i.e., the destruction of Israel).

Even less can it be rationally held that the Palestinian problem is the main source of instability in the Middle East. According to one estimate, since 1948, when Israel came into being, there have been nineteen violent clashes in the region having nothing whatever to do either with the Palestinians or with the Jewish state. Among these have been several major wars, most recently the one between Iran and Iraq, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and Desert Storm itself, not to mention such earlier examples as the Egyptian attack on Yemen, the endless factional carnage in Lebanon, and several Syrian aggressions against Lebanon and Jordan.

In the face of this record, there surely is some-

thing irrational in the assumption that the Palestinian problem is the main source of instability in the Middle East, and that a solution to it is therefore in the vital interest of the United States.

IRRATIONAL or not, this assumption seems to be the main driving force behind the demand of the Bush administration that Israel "trade land for peace." Again, there is nothing new in the demand itself, going back as it does to Resolution 242. But where the West Bank is concerned, a new factor has definitely entered the picture since Resolution 242 was framed. In the past the other party to the trade was supposed to be Jordan. But now that Jordan has renounced its claim to the West Bank, it is the Palestinians—who, it is worth remembering, are not mentioned in Resolution 242—to whom this land is to be "traded."

On this issue as well the Bush administration denies any change in policy. Remaining formally opposed to the establishment of a Palestinian state, it supports the kind of "autonomy" for the Palestinians living on the West Bank and Gaza that was envisaged, with Israeli approval, by the Camp David accords, to be followed, after a trial period of three to five years, by negotiations between Israel and the local inhabitants on the final status of the territories.

At the time of Camp David, the Palestinians contemptuously dismissed this provision. All that autonomy offered them, they said, was the right to collect their own garbage. Naturally they would not settle for so derisory a concession from the Israelis. In fact, they would settle for nothing less than statehood.

It was a perfect example of the famous propensity of the Palestinians "never to miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity." But to judge by their behavior in the present round of negotiations, the Palestinians have at last learned better. Finally grasping an opportunity, they now say that they are willing to begin with autonomy as a step on the road to statehood.

Anyone who thinks that this emphasis on final statehood represents a piece of face-saving rhetoric is fooling himself: the Palestinians will not be satisfied with autonomy, and they will do everything in their power to use it as a stepping stone to a Palestinian state. And anyone who thinks that the Bush administration (assuming the President is reelected in 1992) will stick with its opposition to the establishment of such a state has misread both its tactics and its strategy. For like the newly clever Palestinians themselves, the Bush administration almost certainly sees autonomy as the first stage of a process that will lead to Palestinian statehood in the West Bank and Gaza (though, unlike the Palestinians, Bush and his people are likely to opt for some form of internationalization or "Vaticanization" that would keep Jerusalem united instead of dividing it up between Palestinians and Israelis).

One can only speculate as to why Bush and his people are working toward support for a Palestinian state. But considering that Bush's foreign policy in every area of the world has made stability its highest value,* and recalling once again that he seems to accept the view that the Palestinian problem is the main source of instability in the Middle East, it is reasonable to suppose that he regards a Palestinian state as the best or possibly even the only way to bring stability to that particular region.

Yet this is so far-fetched an expectation that it too smacks of irrationality. Indeed, far from being a formula for peace and stability, a Palestinian state would lead in very short order to instability and war. Thus, no sooner would the new state come into being than it would become Lebanonized. That is, a struggle would begin for control between the Fatah wing of the PLO and the Muslim fundamentalists of Hamas—a struggle that would be complicated by the entry of the pro-Syrian wing of the PLO and probably also elements subservient to Jordan and others to Iraq. At some stage, Syria, which regards the entire territory now divided between Israel and Jordan as Southern Syria, would find a pretext to intervene, just as it did in Lebanon. But such a Syrian move would have to be resisted by the Israelis, and war would be the inevitable result, with other Arab states, including Iraq, overcoming their own mutual enmities to join in.

If Israel were to lose the war—and pushed back now to the '67 borders, it would be much more vulnerable to attack both from the sea and from the Samarian and Judean heights†—the Arabs would finally have realized their dream of wiping the Jewish state off the map. If Israel were to win, it would, in a monstrous irony, wind up reoccupying the very territories from which the "peace process" would have driven it—but at the cost of God knows how many thousands of lives.

Of course, other scenarios can be imagined, but none that is even remotely realistic leads to anything but turmoil, terrorism, and war.

No wonder, then, that the vast majority of Israelis, including those who support the Labor party, are so sure that they would be placing themselves in mortal danger if they acquiesced in

* See the article by George Weigel beginning on p. 36 of this issue.

† "As the Gulf War proved once again," David Bar-Illan of the *Jerusalem Post* recently wrote in the *Wall Street Journal*, "missiles can do damage, . . . but only occupation by ground forces can bring defeat. . . . Had Israel adopted Washington's variously named plans of the past 23 years and retreated to the 1967 lines (with minor modifications), Saddam Hussein would have controlled the whole land mass from the Iranian border to the outskirts of Tel Aviv. Absent Israel's control of the Jordan River and the Samarian-Judean heights, nothing could have prevented pro-Saddam Jordan, and the Palestinian state that would have arisen in the evacuated areas, from joining forces with him."

the establishment of a new Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza.

At the same time, it is also true that most Israelis hate having to rule over another people, and that many of them worry about the corrupting effects of the occupation on their democratic culture. That is why they are so desperately eager to believe in autonomy as a viable alternative to continued occupation on the one side and withdrawal followed by Palestinian statehood on the other. It may well be that Yitzhak Shamir has by now persuaded himself that autonomy is indeed the way out, though it seems more probable that he is only using autonomy to buy time in the hope (*à la* the famous old Jewish joke) that the king will die or the horse will talk—in other words, that some miracle comparable to the collapse of the Soviet empire will strike the Middle East and open up possibilities of accommodation that are under present conditions either inconceivable or too dangerous to risk. But whether or not Shamir is really serious about the prospects of autonomy, neither he nor anyone likely to succeed him in the near future will agree to withdrawal from the territories in favor of a new Palestinian state.

Unless, that is, the United States were to leave the Israelis with no other choice—say, by threatening to wash its hands of Israel, suspend all military aid, and throw the whole issue over to the tender mercies of the Security Council. One would like to think that the United States would never do such a thing. Yet so pervasive is the idea within our political culture that the Palestinians have a right to their own state (even though

they already have one under the name of Jordan, whose population is 70-percent Palestinian), and so convinced are our foreign-policy “experts” that a second Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza would bring peace and harmony to the Middle East, that a change in American policy from opposition to endorsement of such a state will be very hard to prevent.

ON THE other hand, despite the enormous success of Arab propaganda, which has pulled off the Orwellian trick of transmuting a war by the Arab world against the Jewish state into a war by the Jewish state against the Palestinian people, and despite the relentless Israel-bashing which has become the favorite sport of journalists on both ends of the political spectrum, there is still a great deal of sympathy for Israel in this country. It is a sympathy based on a sense of cultural and political kinship, shared values, and common interests, and it can be appealed to and activated by the argument that forcing Israel to withdraw from the territories in favor of a new Palestinian state would be tantamount to placing that beleaguered and besieged nation in mortal danger.

Placing Israel in such peril is not something the American people would wish to do, which is why there is a good chance that they will stop their government from doing it—provided, that is, an urgent effort is made to open their eyes to the game being played by the Bush administration and to the irrationality of its obsession with and its ideas about the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Why Anita Hill Lost

Suzanne Garment

WE WILL simply have to accept, for the present, that no more than two people in the world can know with certainty whether Clarence Thomas said to Anita Hill what she says he did.

Shortly before the U.S. Senate was to vote on his nomination to the Supreme Court in October 1991, Hill charged Thomas with sexually harassing her when she worked for him at the Department of Education and then at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), by asking her out and forcing her to listen to obscene talk; but the crime of harassment, as Hill explained, often has no witnesses. This central, crucial mystery did not mute the debate or make the advocates any more tentative in their arguments. Instead, the Hill-Thomas case became perhaps the biggest sex scandal in American history. Combatants on both sides attacked their opponents in an explosion of resentment and hate. Hill and Thomas were forced to testify publicly to the Senate Judiciary Committee about intimate aspects of their lives; they became contending gladiators in the arena, with us in the television audience poised to turn thumbs up or thumbs down. The Senate became an object of general contempt, since most of the Senators on whom we depended to question Thomas and Hill lacked either the skill to elicit the information we wanted or the moral stature to act as proper judges.

The case had its roots in recent American history, beginning with the battle over Robert H. Bork, whom President Ronald Reagan nominated to the Supreme Court in the fall of 1987.* Bork was not only a highly qualified nominee but one of the chief intellects of the American legal profession. He had become a symbol of American legal conservatism and its challenge to the liberalism dominating the upper reaches of the profession.

Bork's opponents attacked him with a campaign of unprecedented scope. Senator Edward Kennedy began it by sounding a call to arms, portraying Bork as an enemy of free speech and

of the established rights of women and minority groups. Kennedy and other Democratic Senators helped put off hearings on the nomination in order to give liberal interest groups time to organize and launch a media campaign. Among the campaign's chief target audiences were black organizations throughout the South. This strategy was successful: fear of displeasure in the black community caused crucial Southern Democratic Senators to vote against Bork.

Politics in the selection of Supreme Court Justices was nothing new in this country's history, but the anti-Bork effort set a couple of precedents. For one thing, it buried the traditional, largely internal Senate politics of Supreme Court selection under mass-communications techniques developed for national political campaigns. Moreover, it was unabashed in its claim that Supreme Court Justices could legitimately be rejected for their ideology and political views. Thus during and after the anti-Bork campaign, its operatives were happy to give the press the details of their new and successful political tactics. We learned about their organized rallies, their telephone banks to generate mail to key Senators, their computer bulletin boards, their fundraising methods, and their choice of "opinion-making markets" for their TV advertising.

THE modern Senate, without the strong leadership that might have resisted such tactics, showed in the Bork fight that it was extremely open to the new style of Supreme Court politics. So, when Clarence Thomas was nominated for the Supreme Court in 1991, some of the organizational veterans of the Bork fight geared up, as more than one of them put it, to "Bork" Thomas as well. People for the American Way reenlisted in the fight. So did the National Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the Alliance for Justice, the National Abortion Rights Action League, the National Women's Law Center, the Women's Legal Defense Fund, the National Women's Political Caucus, and the National Organization for Women.

SUZANNE GARMENT is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute and the author of, most recently, *Scandal: The Culture of Mistrust in American Politics* (Times Books/Random House).

* For a fuller discussion of the Bork nomination, see my article, "The War Against Robert H. Bork," COMMENTARY, January 1988.

But their strategy did not work the second time around. Because Thomas was a black conservative and an opponent of the more sweeping versions of affirmative action, much of the traditional civil-rights leadership harbored a special resentment toward him. Yet affirmative action was a dangerous issue to raise against Thomas, since it had become such an unpopular idea among the general public. Furthermore, even in the civil-rights groups, many people identified with Thomas's rise from poverty, and the resulting ambivalence kept these organizations from exerting the force they had shown with the Bork nomination. In addition, Thomas supporters had learned a thing or two from the Bork battle and made sure that charges against their man did not go unanswered in the media.

Finally, during his first confirmation hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Thomas appeared to contradict or qualify his past conservative views more dramatically than Bork had done. Thomas escaped from the trap of declaring himself one way or the other on the abortion issue by saying that he had never debated the legal aspects of *Roe v. Wade*. The Senators of the Judiciary Committee, even as they asked Thomas repeatedly about abortion, accepted his evasions and denials. All parties knew, by that time, the necessary steps in the post-Bork ballet.

The Judiciary Committee sent Thomas's nomination to the full Senate on a vote of seven-to-seven. In mid-October, on the eve of the Senate's final vote on Thomas, his confirmation looked like a sure thing.

Meanwhile, as the chances of defeating the Thomas nomination grew smaller, both the press and the groups working against him grew ever more vigorous in their search for material to use against him. Employees at the EEOC reported getting repeated phone calls from journalists and Thomas opponents explicitly asking for "dirt." On Sunday, October 6, after the Senate Judiciary Committee had voted to send the Thomas nomination to the Senate, *Newsday* and National Public Radio reported that for a month the committee had had in its possession an affidavit from a woman named Anita Hill making charges of sexual harassment.

This particular accusation, like the mobilization of interest groups against Thomas, had a recent history in American politics.

Political sex scandals have been a perennial feature of American life, but in the past quarter-century these scandals have begun to acquire a new character and meaning. As late as the mid-60's, politically active people who considered themselves liberal tended to be relatively tolerant in matters of sex and to accept the idea that every individual, even a politician, had a private sphere of life that was none of the public's business.

The women's movement changed all that. From the late 60's onward, we heard from movement writers that sex was more often a tool of oppres-

sion than a simple plaything, and that personal habits like a male politician's treatment of women were something the public had every right to know about. By the time of Watergate we had developed not only a vast publicity machine capable of spreading such personal scandals across the land but a rationale that gave us, the high-minded voters, permission to pay detailed attention to these salacious matters.

The first consequence of this shift was an efflorescence of classic adultery scandals. But in the mid-1980's, a more important consequence of the new thinking appeared: we began to see many more scandals involving charges of sexual coercion or sex without full consent. It was only a matter of time before such matters would assume center stage in some confirmation drama. In this sense, the Thomas episode was a scandal waiting to happen.

ANITA HILL certainly seemed an individual to be taken seriously. She was, like Thomas, black. Like Thomas also, she came from a rural background, having been raised on a farm in Oklahoma, the youngest of thirteen children. And, like Thomas again, she had attended Yale Law School. When Thomas was about to become Assistant Secretary of Education for Civil Rights, a mutual friend introduced the two of them, and Thomas offered her a job. She worked with him for nine months; he then resigned to become chairman of the EEOC. She went with him and worked at the commission until 1983, when she left to take a teaching job at Oral Roberts University in her home state.

In charging that Thomas had harassed her both at the Education Department and at the EEOC, Hill lacked any evident political motive: she was described as a Reagan appointee, a Bork supporter, and a conservative, though it later emerged that she had had political differences with the Reagan administration from the beginning and had criticized Thomas, to the FBI in July and to the press in September, for his position on affirmative action and the problem of black dependency.

A friend and former law-school classmate of Hill's said that she had told him, within days of the Thomas nomination in July, about the nominee's sexual harassment of her. Ricki Seidman, former legal director of People for the American Way and now an aide to Senate Judiciary Committee Democrat Edward Kennedy (though she was not on the Judiciary Committee staff itself), called Hill in early September to ask her about the harassment. Hill proved willing to talk further. James Brudney, an aide to Judiciary Committee member Howard Metzenbaum (though also not on the Judiciary Committee staff), and another former Yale Law School classmate of Hill's, called her and continued the conversation. The FBI finally began investigating Hill's charges on

September 23 and reported back to the committee on the 26th, a day before the scheduled vote on whether to send the Thomas nomination to the full Senate. Thus the committee had little time to consider the accusations.

Thomas supporters protested the introduction of a new charge against him, after so many other accusations had been leveled and failed, on the very eve of the confirmation vote. Thomas opponents said that because not much was known about the charges, the vote should be postponed and Hill's story given a more thorough airing.

But the opponents said a great deal more as well. They claimed that the Senate, by its treatment of Hill, had already demonstrated men's outrageous indifference to the welfare of women and the fundamental incapacity of male elected officials to give proper political representation to their female constituents. If the Senators went ahead with their floor vote on Thomas as scheduled, they would compound the insult.

The anger of Thomas's critics drove out respect for procedural traditions and niceties. The Judiciary Committee had considered Hill's charges privately, in agreement with Hill's expressed wishes; but someone on some Senate committee staff decided that he or she was morally justified in overriding these rules of confidentiality and leaking Hill's affidavit, either directly to the press or to an intermediary, and subjecting both Hill and Thomas to a public airing of the issue.

After the leak, Thomas's supporters said that because he was to be effectively put on trial, he should be given the presumption of innocence: Hill should have to come up with some solid corroboration of her claim. Thomas's opponents dismissed this idea, explaining that since sexual harassment often took place in private, an absence of corroborating evidence was only to be expected. Asking for the conventional presumption of innocence under this circumstance would be nothing other than a fancy version of "blaming the victim."

The opponents evidently calculated that by bathing the whole affair in the light of publicity, they could undo the Judiciary Committee's verdict. And indeed, at first they seemed to succeed. But in the end, they succeeded too well. They forced a public event that featured Hill and Thomas facing off against each other directly and individually. They provided Hill with a phalanx of lawyers to match Thomas's White House handlers. They created, in other words, a forum that strongly resembled a criminal trial.

No, it was not an actual criminal trial; the Thomas hearings were meant to investigate a character question broader than issues of criminal guilt, and the rules were looser—so loose, it later turned out, as to seem nonexistent. But the hearing and its stakes were trial-like enough so that onlookers tended inexorably—like good products

of a liberal society—to apply "presumption of innocence" standards as they watched the proceedings. This feature made Thomas measurably harder to dislodge.

In addition, Thomas's opponents may have underestimated just how big an audience they would attract. The comparison with the Bork nomination is instructive: what most citizens knew of the earlier struggle came to them through television news, which had its own distinct biases. Watching the Hill-Thomas face-off, by contrast, was a mass activity.

People may have begun by tuning in the hearings for entertainment, but they stayed on to make sober judgments, and these judgments turned out to be radically different from those of the anti-Thomas activists who had first insisted on bringing the controversy out into the open.

To see how the huge audience engaged by the public hearings finally formed its opinions, we must first look to the center of the storm and the story Anita Hill told; for, in one of the many asymmetries of the case, it was Hill and not Thomas whose account became the focus of the controversy. The questions asked by the Senators helped shape what information Hill gave, of course, and the press influenced the way we saw her. Still, the public had a huge amount of direct access to Hill and what she said, and there is little reason to think that this public failed to make up its own mind.

THE most detailed version of Hill's case appeared in the opening statement she delivered on October 11 at the Judiciary Committee's first public session investigating her charges. In it she explained that three months after she had gone to work for Clarence Thomas at the Department of Education in 1981, he asked her out. She said no. He kept asking and started talking to her about sex. "He spoke," said Hill,

about acts that he had seen in pornographic films involving such matters as women having sex with animals and films showing group sex or rape scenes. He talked about pornographic materials depicting individuals with large penises or large breasts involving various sex acts. On several occasions, Thomas told me graphically of his own sexual prowess.

This talk, said Hill, then ended. When Thomas was made chairman of the EEOC, he invited her to follow him, and she did. There he resumed the sexual conversations and overtures. Once, in Hill's presence, he looked at a Coke can from which he was drinking and remarked, "Who has put pubic hair on my Coke?" He talked about the size of his penis and about oral sex. She began looking for other employment and finally left the EEOC in 1983 when she found her teaching job at Oral Roberts University. Since that time, she had seen Thomas only twice and had minimal phone contact with him. She had not spoken publicly about

the harassment until she was asked about it by Senate staffers investigating the Thomas nomination.

She told her story to the Senators in a calm and composed way. During the intense questioning that followed, she did not stumble or contradict herself in talking about the words that she claimed had passed between Thomas and herself.

Her testimony, however, did have inconsistencies. Some of these were of the sort one would expect from any account, even a truthful one, by a reluctant witness remembering events that took place years ago. For instance, during questioning Republicans pointed to the fact that Hill's charges against Thomas had changed over time, becoming more detailed from her first FBI interview (in July 1991) through her affidavit and second FBI interview in September to her considerably more elaborate testimony to the Judiciary Committee. While these variations could point to inventiveness on her part or openness to suggestions from the Senate staffers who had first contacted her, such changes can also take place as an individual remembers progressively more about a past event. They are not necessarily the result of lies.

On the other hand, most of the inconsistencies and conflicts in and around Hill's testimony and statements were not of this random sort; they fell into a pattern. These conflicts, which might have seemed small or accidental or the product of animus if taken one by one, became more important because they so closely echoed one another. The inconsistencies all revolved around two questions: How personally and professionally ambitious was Hill? And how well did she usually look out for her own welfare and interests?

The first such problem arose in Hill's story of how it was that she came to give her information to the Judiciary Committee in the first place and of why the committee had delayed for almost a month in considering her charges. "I was approached by the Senate Judiciary Committee in early September," she said in the press conference she gave after her story became public. But it was not until September 20 "that an FBI investigation was suggested to me. . . ."

"I suggested to the committee throughout," Hill emphasized, "that I wanted to make this information available to every member of the Senate committee for their consideration. . . ."

She later said, "Reliving this experience has been really bad for me, . . . especially with the frustrations that I have felt with trying to get the information in the right hands."

A journalist asked, "Did you at some point offer to make these allegations by name? Did you discuss the removal of your request for confidentiality, and at what point did that occur?" Hill replied:

The extent of my confidentiality was never to keep the committee members from knowing my name. The extent of my confidentiality was

making sure that the names were not released to the public. . . . So at all times the Senate knew my name, the committee knew who I was. So that wasn't ever an issue.

Senator Joseph Biden, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, promptly issued a statement saying that the delay was not the committee's fault, the staff had been "guided by Professor Hill's repeated requests for confidentiality." The Biden statement provided a detailed chronology, based on documentation, of the committee's dealings with Hill. It asserted that Hill did not make her first contact with the committee until September 12. A committee staffer told Hill then that her charge could be kept confidential, but that the investigation could go no further unless her name and accusations were given to Thomas so that he would have an opportunity to respond. "Professor Hill specifically stated," said the chronology, that "she did not want the nominee to know that she had stated her concerns to the committee."

A week later, on September 19, according to the committee staff, Hill called again:

For the first time, she told full committee staff that she wanted all members of the committee to know about her concerns, and, if her name needed to be used to achieve that goal, she wanted to know. She also wanted to be apprised of her "options."

The next day the staff called Hill to explain again that before her accusations went to committee members, Thomas would have to be given her name and a chance to respond in an FBI investigation.

Hill, according to the chronology, said she wanted to think about it and phoned the next day to say that she would not agree to the FBI investigation. Two days after this refusal, though, she contacted the staff and agreed to the investigation. Three days after the FBI finally got to interview Hill, it finished its report.

HILL's account thus asserted that she had always been willing to use her name in any way necessary to bring her concerns to the committee members' attention. But only late in the game, according to her, did committee staffers inform her that she had to let the FBI investigate and let Thomas know her name before committee members could be told of her story.

In Senator Biden's version, by contrast, Hill was told from the beginning that in order to go forward and get her story to the committee members, she would have to give Thomas her name. She said no. She changed her mind and called the committee a week later—but when she was again told the conditions, she again said no. Then she changed her mind once more and finally agreed to the FBI investigation.

These two conflicting stories draw two quite different pictures of Anita Hill. In Biden's ac-

count, Hill decides to go to the committee but learns, only after making contact, that in order to pursue her charge she must confront her accuser and face the consequences—emotional, moral, and professional. She wrestles with this problem, under pressures whose nature we do not know, for almost ten days. She finally lets the investigation go forward, but at a late date that greatly lessens the chances of the committee's giving substantial consideration to her concerns.

This picture that the Biden staff drew of Anita Hill does not portray her as particularly dishonorable. After all, the decision she had to reach was not easy, and the fact that she weighed her actions carefully does not necessarily make her a mendacious witness. Still, the Anita Hill in Biden's story, even while coming forward as a good citizen to aid the committee in its task, prudently protects her own interests. As a result, she is partly responsible for the delay that she criticized and that women's groups cited as evidence of the committee's dismissive attitude toward her.

The Anita Hill of her own account is quite different. She is not so smart as Biden's Anita Hill, not so quick to grasp legal and political complexities, not so capable of giving deliberate, cautious thought to the personal consequences of the actions she contemplates, and more exclusively moved by the simple, uncomplicated desire to tell the truth and do her civic duty.

The very same conflict emerged when one of the Judiciary Committee's Republicans, Senator Arlen Specter, cross-examined Hill during her public testimony about her dealings with Senate aides in the days before she sent her statement to the Judiciary Committee.

According to a *USA Today* story published at the time of her testimony, Hill had been assured by one staffer that merely telling Thomas about the existence of her charges would make him withdraw, and that Hill would not have to come forward publicly. In other words, the story implied, Hill was playing a somewhat less heroic role than it might appear.

"Did anyone ever tell you," Specter asked, "that by providing the statement that there would be a move to press Judge Thomas to withdraw his nomination?"

"I don't recall any story about pressing—using this to press anyone," she answered.

Specter tried again: "Well, do you recall anything at all about anything related to that?"

"I think I was told," she said, "that my statement would be shown to Judge Thomas, and I agreed to that."

"But was there any suggestion, however slight," Specter asked a third time, "that the statement with these serious charges would result in a withdrawal so that it wouldn't have to be necessary for your identity to be known, or for you to come forward under circumstances like these?"

"There was no—not that I recall," she said. "I

don't recall anything being said about him being pressed to resign."

"I would ask you," Specter continued, "to press your recollection as to what happened within the last month."

"And I have done that, Senator," she said, "and I don't recall that comment."

"I'm asking you now," Specter finally said, "only if it did happen whether that would be the kind of statement to you which would be important and impressed upon you [so] that you could remember in the course of four or five weeks."

Hill said, "I don't recall a specific statement, and I cannot say whether that comment would have stuck in my mind. I really cannot say this."

But in the afternoon session of the same day, without being asked the question again, Hill, talking generally about how she had come forward to the Judiciary Committee, offered the information that one of her conversations "even included something to the effect that the information might be presented to the candidate and to the White House. There was some indication that the candidate, or, excuse me, the nominee, might not wish to continue the process."

Later Specter pressed further: "So Mr. Brudney [Senator Metzenbaum's aide] did tell you Judge Thomas might not wish to go forward with his nomination if you came forward?"

"Yes," replied Hill.

Specter later claimed that Hill's morning testimony, had she not contradicted it, would have been "flat-out perjury." Hill supporters were outraged by the accusation, calling her misstep only a minor inconsistency. What is more certain than either of these interpretations is that Hill's corrected testimony in the afternoon session presented a picture of her that was congruent with the portrait in the Biden chronology: this was a woman who knew, discussed, and cared about her "options," and who gave thought to the means by which she could accomplish her goal while avoiding personal risk. Nothing in this was necessarily pejorative. So it is especially interesting to see how persistently Hill omitted this element from the picture she gave of herself during the morning's five successive rounds of questioning on the subject.

THE same discrepancy was more pronounced in other parts of Hill's speech and testimony—in the matter, for example, of why she went to work for Thomas at the EEOC. Hill contended that Thomas had harassed her in her first job with him, at the Department of Education; yet when he moved to the EEOC chairmanship in the spring of 1982, she chose to go along with him. In her initial press conference Hill explained this oddity. "There was a period" at the Education Department, she said, "[during] which the activity stopped." "Furthermore," she went on,

at that time I was twenty-five years old. . . . If I had quit, I would have been jobless: I had not built a résumé such that I could have expected to go out and get a job. And you'll recall that in the early 80's, there was a hiring freeze in the federal government. I wanted to stay in civil rights. I thought I had something to add.

Later, in her testimony to the Judiciary Committee, she said:

The work [at the EEOC] was interesting, and at that time it appeared that the sexual overtures which had so troubled me had ended. I also faced the realistic fact that I had no alternative job. While I might have gone back to private practice, perhaps in my old firm or at another, I was dedicated to civil-rights work and my first choice was to be in that field. Moreover, at that time, the Department of Education itself was a dubious venture. President Reagan was seeking to abolish the entire department.

She told Chairman Biden in later questioning, "My understanding from [Thomas] at that time was that I could go with him to the EEOC, that I did not have, since I was his special assistant, that I did not have a position at the Office for Education." She also said, "I was a special assistant of a political appointee, and therefore I assumed and I was told that that position may not continue to exist." And she said about the Education Department as a whole, "The Department of Education at that time was scheduled to be abolished. There had been a lot of talk about it, and at that time it was truly considered to be on its way out."

Biden said he had been informed that Hill herself was not a political appointee at the Department of Education: she was a Schedule-A attorney, with job protection. Couldn't she have stayed at the department? "I believe I was a Schedule-A attorney," she said, but "I was the assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Education"; "I had not been interviewed by anyone who was to take over that position for that job; I was not even informed that I could stay on as a Schedule-A attorney."

"As a Schedule-A attorney," Biden persisted, "you could have stayed in some job."

"I suppose," Hill answered, "as far as I know, I could have. But I am not sure, because at the time, the agency was scheduled to be abolished."

She told Senator Specter:

I didn't know who was going to be taking over the position. I had not been interviewed to become the special assistant of the new individual. I assumed that they would want to hire their own, as Judge Thomas had done.

In telling why she had followed Thomas to the EEOC, Hill got herself into a certain amount of evidentiary trouble. Believing that a Yale Law School graduate did not know anything about her Schedule-A job protection was as hard as thinking

that a Yale Law School graduate would not have understood that the Judiciary Committee would require her to confront her accuser. As for Hill's going to the EEOC in order to stay in the civil-rights field, that was the field in which she was already working at the Department of Education and in which she could have remained. As for Hill's belief that she would not be kept on by Thomas's successor at the Department of Education, she could easily enough have asked: this successor was a friend of Thomas's, and Hill also had independent access to the new official through a mutual friend. And as for Hill's seriously thinking the Department of Education was "scheduled" to be abolished (it still exists), there cannot have been three people in the federal government who did not know that it would have taken a year and a half just to get the moving labels on the furniture.

These contradictions were used to good account by Hill's enemies, yet they could easily have been resolved. Hill did not have to go to the EEOC in order to stay in the civil-rights field, but she did have to go there if she wanted to be at the center of the civil-rights action and keep herself hitched to the rising star of her boss, Clarence Thomas. Working for Thomas's successor or staying on in some Schedule-A position at the Education Department might have seemed like a perfectly good job to some, but it was not so good if one thought of it as being left behind instead of going on to a much better professional opportunity. Thus, Hill's reason for following Thomas to the EEOC in spite of harassment was perfectly plausible—if one only added, as Hill did not in her accounts, the notion that she was moved by the ambition to advance her career.

But Hill did not speak of her own ambition. As a result, in her account of her move to the EEOC she sounded as if she were offering too many reasons making too little sense.

SHE fell into the same kind of trouble when she talked about her relationship with Thomas after she left the EEOC in 1983 to teach at the law school of Oral Roberts University. Here is the way Hill, in her testimony, described how she got her job at Oral Roberts: "I participated in a seminar, taught an afternoon session in a seminar at Oral Roberts University. The dean of the university saw me teaching and inquired as to whether I would be interested." She said, "I agreed to take the job in large part because of my desire to escape the pressures I felt at the EEOC due to Judge Thomas." She said she told Thomas in July that she was leaving. "I got that job on my own," she asserted, explaining that she had asked Thomas for a recommendation only after she had landed the job and "only because the process required some kind of letter from an employer."

Here, in contrast, is what Thomas testified about the subject:

In the spring of 1983, Mr. Charles Kothe contacted me to speak at the law school at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Anita Hill, who is from Oklahoma, accompanied me on that trip. It was not unusual that individuals on my staff would travel with me occasionally. Anita Hill accompanied me on that trip primarily because this was an opportunity to combine business and a visit to her home. As I recall, during our visit at Oral Roberts University, Mr. Kothe mentioned to me the possibility of approaching Anita Hill to join the faculty at Oral Roberts University law school. I encouraged him to do so and noted to him, as I recall, that Anita Hill would do well in a teaching position. I recommended her highly, and she eventually was offered a teaching position.

Charles A. Kothe, then dean of the O.W. Colburn School of Law at Oral Roberts, said it was at Thomas's invitation that Hill attended the afternoon seminar she mentioned in her testimony. Kothe said that when he learned Hill was from Oklahoma, he expressed interest in hiring her, asking Thomas what he thought of the idea. Thomas said, Kothe remembered, that Hill would make a good teacher.

In Hill's testimony, Thomas and his role are missing—his taking her on the Oklahoma trip in the first place, his inviting her to the Oral Roberts seminar, and his early role in recommending her for her new job. If Hill had included any of these things, they would not necessarily have shown her charges against Thomas to be false: a woman with job aspirations or professional ambitions might well decide to endure harassment to get something back from the harasser in the form of contacts or recommendations, just as such a woman might put up with disagreeable treatment for the benefit of an upward move. A woman making this type of trade-off would be, of course, one with personal and professional aims well beyond the need to put bread on the table. It was this sort of ambition that Hill's account excised.

The same discrepancy appears elsewhere. A former Oral Roberts law professor said that Hill had suggested Thomas as a speaker for an employment-discrimination conference at the school; Hill denied that she had wanted Thomas there. Thomas said that when he did visit the school, Hill drove him to the airport, and Dean Kothe remembered that she had offered to do so. Hill disputed the recollection:

I really don't recall that I voluntarily agreed to drive him to the airport. I think that the dean suggested that I drive him to the airport and that I said that I would. But at any rate, one of the things I have said is that I intended—I hoped to keep a cordial professional relationship with that individual and so I did him the courtesy of driving him to the airport.

Specter asked, "Was it simply a matter that you wanted to derive whatever advantage you could from a cordial professional relationship?"

"It was a matter that I did not want to invoke any kind of retaliation against me professionally," Hill made the distinction. "It wasn't that I was trying to get any benefit out of it."

"Well," Specter followed, "you say that you consulted with him about a letter of recommendation. That would have been a benefit, wouldn't it?"

"Well," Hill resisted, "that letter of recommendation was necessary. The application asked for a recommendation from a former employer."

THIS tussle over the presence or absence of deliberative ambition as a force directing Anita Hill was waged most dramatically over the issue of the phone logs. Diane Holt, Thomas's secretary at the EEOC, remembered that Hill had phoned Thomas a number of times after leaving the agency. In fact, a hunt through Holt's phone logs revealed ten calls from Hill, including one to congratulate him on his marriage. Hill responded by telling the *Washington Post* that the phone logs were "garbage." She said she had called Thomas once in 1990 to make sure he had received an invitation initiated by others at the University of Oklahoma law school, her professional home after Oral Roberts, to speak at commencement. Apart from that, she said, "If there are messages to him from me, these are attempts to return phone calls." She went on: "I never called him to say hello. I found out about his marriage through a third party. I never called him to congratulate him."

The logs became a major subject of controversy during the hearings. In her testimony, Hill explained her calls to Thomas by saying, "I have, on at least three occasions, been asked to act as a conduit to him for others." When this happened, said Hill, she would speak to Thomas's secretary, "and on some of these occasions undoubtedly I passed on some casual comment to then-Chairman Thomas." She added:

In August of 1987, I was in Washington, D.C., and I did call Diane Holt. In the course of this conversation, she asked me how long I was going to be in town, and I told her. It is recorded in the message as August 15. It was in fact August 20. She told me about Judge Thomas's marriage, and I did say "Congratulate him."

She claimed that what she had called "garbage" to the *Washington Post* was not the authenticity of the phone logs themselves but the use of the logs to attack her. She denied the *Post* story that quoted her as saying she had initiated no calls to Thomas.

But when Holt testified, she said that in addition to the uncompleted calls recorded in the logs, Hill had made still other calls—perhaps five or six—to Thomas. Holt said that the calls recorded in the logs were not returns of Thomas's calls, and they were not calls to Holt herself in which a message to Thomas was tacked on.

On the issue of the logs, Hill was forced to do some public backtracking. As with the questions about her Oral Roberts job, the question of whether and why Hill had initiated all those calls did not speak directly to the truth of her charge about Clarence Thomas and the obscenities he allegedly spoke. Thomas was Hill's mentor and a professionally rising star, and she clearly benefited from being known as someone connected to him. Advances and obscenities or no, a professional woman under these circumstances might well have thought it prudent to take even elaborate steps to make sure the relationship stayed alive. Once again, all we need to reconcile her phone calls with her charges against Thomas is to assume that Hill was a woman of some ambition; but this is the picture that Hill denied.

TOWARD the end of the hearings, one of Hill's attorneys announced that she had taken and passed a polygraph test. Nevertheless, the Americans who followed the Thomas controversy told New York Times/CBS pollsters after the hearings that by a ratio of more than two-to-one, 58 percent versus 24 percent, they found Thomas more believable than Hill. This was about the same ratio of those who had favored confirming Thomas throughout the nomination process. After all the talk in the press about the unrepresentative nature of the "all-white, all-male Senate Judiciary Committee" that had made the original decision to vote on Thomas despite Anita Hill's charges, there was little difference, in the end, between men and women or between blacks and whites in their opinions.

There are, by now, scores of explanations of how this lopsided majority was built; clearly, people's answers to the question "Whom do you believe more?" were made up of many considerations. It is odd that we have seen virtually no after-the-fact polling that might help us distinguish among such theories.

The reason for the pro-Thomas verdict, one explanation went, was that Thomas had won the battle of images. Hill's performance had been too "cool" for the American public; Thomas's passionate delivery style had simply played better to the audience. But looking at Hill's testimony suggests that "cool" was not quite the word for the disquieting quality that she displayed. Not only the Senate questioners but a series of witnesses portrayed Hill as a somewhat ambitious and calculating woman, certainly more ambitious and calculating than she let on. Her testimony on the subject seemed to show a lack of candor, and this fact alone may have been a basis for mistrusting her. But the problem lay deeper: Hill's perceived ambitiousness probably led many people to reject her description of herself as a victim of sexual harassment.

In the feminist view, such a proposition is cause for anger. After all, why couldn't Hill be both an ambitious professional and a woman humiliated

and disempowered by sexual harassment? Wasn't failure to admit this possibility just another way of denigrating the importance of sexual harassment? But most people seem not to have shared this attitude, and we can get a clue as to why not by taking a look at the stories of sexual harassment that filled mass-circulation magazines like *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *People* during the crisis.

Some of these tales would curl your hair, and legitimately so. A female laborer and dump-truck driver for a municipal sewage department had to face persistent questioning by her supervisor about her sex life and her husband's anatomy. A restaurant manager who protested when her boss asked her to perform oral sex in front of another employee was tailed by a private detective and fired for not ringing up drinks correctly. A secretary had a supervisor who threatened to fire her if she did not sleep with him. A public-information officer at a state corrections department had a boss who made lewd comments about her and her one-year-old daughter and had her fired when she complained.

There can be disputes aplenty about the facts behind such charges, but the accusations themselves are clearly serious. They were made by working-class or lower-middle-class women occupying ordinary jobs rather than high professional positions. These women's situations involved firing or explicit threats of firing. Even when the accusations were of verbal rather than physical assaults, the attacks were aimed quite frontally at the women who were forced to listen.

In Anita Hill's case, there was no physical grabbing. Thomas's alleged obscene and pornographic words described himself and a set of movies, not any attributes of Hill herself or sexual acts to be performed by her. Hill's supporters noted that she was at the young and still-vulnerable age of twenty-five when the alleged offenses took place; but in the types of jobs held by many of the women who told their stories to the magazines, a twenty-five-year-old was nobody's baby. Such women were often extremely vulnerable to their supervisors' personal judgments, while Anita Hill had considerable employment protection. These women had limited job choices, while Anita Hill had a Yale law degree. To women like these, retaliation meant dismissal, or demotion, or bad reports, while when Anita Hill told the Senate about the retaliation she feared, she said she was afraid of not getting good enough assignments, being denied a letter of recommendation after she had left the EEOC and was already working in another job, or being cut off from a cordial, professional relationship.

FEDERAL law on sexual harassment says that such harassment can exist without any physical assault or explicit threat. It can occur when a supervisor or co-worker creates a "hostile environment" for the victim by actions "sufficiently severe and pervasive" to "alter the

conditions of employment and create an abusive working environment." When it comes to judging whether or not the environment is hostile, the courts have even ruled that the matter should be viewed from the point of view of the "reasonable victim." If the victim is a woman, that means judging the case from the perspective of a "reasonable woman."

The ideas of a "hostile environment" and the "reasonable woman" have caused controversy: they seem to suggest that any woman will be able to collect damages from any man who speaks words that she finds offensive, even though he may not think them offensive at all. Certainly in the Thomas case some of Hill's supporters assumed that if Thomas spoke the words Hill said he did, he had clearly harassed Hill, humiliated her, and damaged her.

But the dispute between Hill and Thomas was referred to a jury more than half made up of "reasonable women," the great majority of whom were less advantaged than Hill. Viewed from their situation, as from the situation of the "reasonable men" of the jury, Hill had a great deal of protection from Thomas's whims—so that any offensive language from him was less the threatening cause of a "hostile environment" in a legally significant sense than an invitation to tell the creep to get lost.

And what about the implied threat Hill felt to the progress of her career? The answer, in this same view, is that such a threat does not have a comparable moral significance or capacity to do psychological damage as the threat to deprive someone of all or part of her livelihood. If Hill decided to stay and move on and up with Thomas, it was out of calculation, not out of fear. In this sense, it follows, ambition made Hill acquiescent or complicit in the continuation of Thomas's alleged obnoxiousness. In her statements Hill herself, when she repeatedly omitted evidence of an ambition that other witnesses saw at work, seemed to recognize this distinction.

If sexual harassment consists of both the actions of the aggressor and the economic and psychological damage done to the victim, Hill seemed not to have given a true picture of the second half of the formula. So the words of Anita Hill's story give us a fairly clear idea of what could have made people uneasy with her account of Thomas's behavior and prompted them to reject it.

Some pro-Hill activists said after the hearings that Anita Hill's testimony would have looked better were it not for the Democratic Senators on the Judiciary Committee. According to these critics, the Democrats not only sat in silence during the hearings while Republicans viciously attacked Anita Hill, but failed to subject Thomas to anything like the same type of cross-examination. The Democrats' poor performance was said to have been caused not just by a lack of skill but by bad conscience and political vulnerability. Edward Kennedy was so notorious when it came to

women that he could hardly open his mouth during the hearings. Joseph Biden had been charged with plagiarism during the 1988 presidential campaign. Dennis DeConcini was one of the Keating Five involved in the savings-and-loan scandal and, as such, had recently sat in Clarence Thomas's place during public hearings of the Senate Ethics Committee. It was no wonder they went easy on Thomas, the critics concluded; and this asymmetry between Republican and Democratic behavior had permitted him to avoid his just deserts and showed again the need for more women in positions of power.

SUCH asymmetry was at work, all right, but it came from more than personal failings and foibles: it also stemmed from the public quasi-criminal trial into which the Senate had allowed the proceedings to be cast. Anita Hill had charged Clarence Thomas with crimes to which she said there had been no witnesses. The normal courtroom defense to such charges is to try to even the score by eliciting details that damage the accuser's credibility and by testing various theories of her motivation. This chance to attack the accuser is a protection meant to balance the relative ease of making false charges in such "no-witness" cases. Thus the unequal situations of Hill and Thomas were to some extent part and parcel of this type of charge, not something created by Democratic weakness.

In addition, in order to give the concrete details of her charges, Hill had to provide the committee with a great deal of information about the short-term and long-term circumstances under which the alleged acts had occurred. It was this information that gave the Republican cross-examiners material to work with—to probe, pick at, and examine for inconsistencies.

Clarence Thomas, by contrast, did not offer an alternative account of the incidents described by Hill. He did not say anything like, "Yes, I asked her out, but I never said those things to her." He did not answer, "Yes, I said those words, but I meant them as a joke." Instead, he defended himself by just saying "No." Thomas pointed out during the hearings that this position put him at a disadvantage: "You can't prove a negative," he said. But the same posture gave him one very large advantage: "No" is a very small target for a cross-examiner to shoot at. The possibilities for inconsistency and internal contradiction are much more limited than they are in a statement like Hill's. This difference, too, made the cross-examining asymmetrical in a way that needs no resort to Democratic wimpiness to explain.

But, said some critics of the hearings, the Democrats need not have restricted themselves to the narrow story that Clarence Thomas denied. For instance, Hill had charged Thomas with talking to her about pornographic movies. Why not ask Thomas whether he had ever rented such movies?

And, to help assess Thomas's general credibility, why not ask Hill whether the two of them had ever discussed *Roe v. Wade* in their years of working together?

The short answer is that Democratic committee members certainly knew, once they raised these questions, what kind of response they would get from the Republican side: why can't we probe more deeply into Anita Hill's past and psyche to see whether she might indeed be delusional? And why can't we get some Senate staffers before the committee under oath, to see whether they might have suggested to Hill some of the juicy details of her charges?

Any of these questions might be deemed relevant under some rules of evidence. The problem is that the Senate has no such rules. It is not set up like a courtroom, in which professionals from each side would have questioned both Thomas and Hill before an impartial judge—and, it must be said, questioned both of them much more intensely than happened during these hearings. Neither did this Senate hearing operate with the benefit of anything like a grand jury, which sifts through raw data and decides which information is good enough to serve as a legitimate basis for further government action. More informal procedures than those of the courtroom are fine for some types of hearings. But in public hearings on issues of individual guilt and innocence, the absence of rules means that the contest is drenched in free-floating poison. The odds are even slimmer than usual of ever finding a semblance of the truth.

AFTER the Senate vote on Thomas, he took his seat on the Court. His wife Virginia gave a cover interview to *People*, explaining how her religious faith had seen her through the ordeal. Anita Hill received an enthusiastic ovation from a conference of female state legislators when she "issued a ringing call to arms," according to the *New York Times*, on the issue of sexual harassment. Meanwhile, politicians and journalists who had seen the Senate's disarray during the controversy talked about improving "the process." It was a convenient phrase, for it allowed the speaker or writer to express revulsion at the hearings without taking a position in behalf of either Thomas or Hill. Some took their worries about "the process" quite seriously: the Judiciary Committee has decided not only to hire outside counsel to investigate the leak of Hill's affidavit but to allow the FBI into the case. Chairman Biden has said he intends to hold hearings about how the process can be fixed so that a mess like this does not occur again.

But it was not faulty procedures that brought us this problem; it was, instead, the spirit in which some of the players used the procedures. Someone was so partisan and so certain of the righteousness of his or her opposition to Thomas as to feel fully justified in overriding those morally deficient

elected officials in the Senate and leaking Hill's affidavit. And once it leaked, there were liberal organizations in Washington and feminists in the national media willing to treat the massively ambiguous news as a clear and patent outrage.

When it comes to the issue of staffing the federal courts, there is certainly enough partisanship to go around. Yet the spirit that manifested itself at the beginning of the Thomas scandal, the type of factional leftist partisanship that insisted on saddling our institutions with an impossible burden and putting the country through what we saw in those hearings despite clearly serious questions of fact, was truly breathtaking. Even in the bitter politics of federal judicial nominations, these people deserve special worry.

We should also worry about the politicians and journalists in the capital who proved so ready to fall into the now-settled routine of scandal politics, for it was this compliance that enabled the scandal's creators to capture the national agenda. Leaks have become such an ordinary way of doing business that a congressional staffer who has lost an internal battle will not think twice about continuing the fight by making it public. Few journalists will hesitate to publish unconfirmed charges. Those who hear the resulting news story simply assume that a cover-up has been narrowly averted. Politicians will do whatever they must to avoid being associated with this dread cover-up. No one in the system seems to have the power to say "No" and stop the machine.

This time around, with the Thomas scandal, Americans saw the process taking place with a compressed intensity. People managed to make their way through the chaos to some serious conclusions, but they were also forced to watch the scandal sausage being made, and they did not like either the product or the sausage-makers. Even in Washington there were small signs of revulsion. In the midst of the Hill-Thomas fight, the *Washington Post* reported, with an unusual skepticism, on the "increasingly symbiotic relationship between committee staffers, liberal interest groups, and the news media" in "a role once played almost exclusively by the Senate." Since the final vote, it has been reported that senatorial offices are, at least for the moment, no longer so friendly as they once were to some of these groups. The groups themselves are not coming forward, as they did after their Bork experience, to brag about and explain their tactics and strategies. They have not merely lost; they are in bad odor.

Unfortunately, this setback in reputation will not bother them. Having won the Bork fight, they exulted in the way the will of the people had been brought to bear in the battle; having lost the popular contest over Thomas, they will adopt other arguments and work via other means, including a continuing, assiduous use of the confirmation process, to gain what they have consistently failed in recent years to win at the polls.

On the Road to Isolationism?

George Weigel

WITH the death of Communism and the waning of the cold war, a three-sided strategic and moral debate over the future course of U.S. foreign policy has emerged. The anti-Communist coalition that won the "long, twilight struggle" has splintered; erstwhile colleagues in the formulation and execution of the Reagan Doctrine find themselves at cross-purposes. Traditional isolationism, long associated with the Old Right, has been resuscitated through a Hatfields-and-McCoys wedding to the neo-isolationism of the Vietnam-era New Left. And as if that were not enough, a new argument has erupted about the viability of realism (in either its classic European/*Realpolitik* form or its modern American/Niebuhrian construction) as a guide for American action in the world. The parallels to the 1930's are unmistakable: "back to the future" may well define the foreign-policy debate in the 1990's.

I

PERHAPS the most curious of these related phenomena has been the isolationist renaissance. Once regarded as having been consigned to the murkier nether regions of our public discourse, isolationism (or, as its exponents prefer, the new nationalism or "noninterventionism") has once again become a significant voice in the argument over the national interest and the national purpose. (It may seem passing strange that people who drive Hondas, shave with Braun razors, watch Sony TV's, prepare their pesto sauce in Cuisinarts, sip Perrier, Corona, and Glenfiddich, and listen to Deutsche Grammophon recordings should be susceptible to the siren songs of autarky; but, as the metaphysician Yogi Berra said when a Jew was elected mayor of Dublin, "only in America.") It is even possible that the next two presidential elections will be fought in part on

ground defined by the renewal of the old McGovernite call to "Come home, America."

The political potency of the new isolationism derives in large part from the puzzling rapprochement between two hitherto antithetical perceptions of the United States and its role in world affairs. Old Right isolationism, of the sort championed during the 1941 Lend-Lease debate by figures like Senators Gerald Nye of North Dakota and Burton K. Wheeler of Montana, taught U.S. withdrawal from the raw world of European politics because engagement with morally malodorous foreigners would inevitably sully the American experiment in democratic republicanism. They were corrupt; we were pure; we should stay out. The neoisolationism of the New Left during the Vietnam period inverted this analysis. America should "come home" because a racist, imperialist, militarist (and, latterly, sexist) United States would corrupt the emerging nations of the third world. We were corrupt; they were pure; we should get out.

The debate over U.S. policy after Saddam Hussein's invasion and occupation of Kuwait brought to the surface the truce that had been arranged between these antinomies, now reconciled (if only tactically) by their common aversion to "interventionism" and President Bush's New World Order. During the argument over whether Desert Shield should give way to Desert Storm, one wag (a Quaker activist, actually) had rather prescient campaign buttons printed up that read: "McGovern/Buchanan: The PEACE ticket for '92." In view of Patrick J. Buchanan's forthright embrace of "America First" as a campaign theme and the announcement speeches of several Democratic presidential aspirants in the fall of 1991, other buttons, reading "Harkin/Buchanan" or "Kerrey/Buchanan" (or, in the fullness of time, and perhaps most dangerously, "Gephardt/Buchanan"), would capture this sensibility just as nicely.

This bizarre symbiosis has acquired more intellectual credibility than it might otherwise enjoy because the visceral isolationism of the Old Right/New Left activists has been tempered, and the new-nationalist prescription amplified, by the emergence of libertarian scholars and publicists like Ted Galen Carpenter and Doug Bandow of the Cato Institute, and harder-to-classify analysts

GEORGE WEIGEL is the president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C., the author of seven books and editor of four others. He is currently at work on a study of the roles of the Catholic Church in the revolution of 1989 in Central and Eastern Europe, which will be published by Oxford University Press.

like Alan Tonelson of the Economic Strategy Institute, all of whom have pressed the new isolationism vigorously (and without the xenophobia so sadly characteristic of some of Buchanan's writing). It was, in fact, a potent sign of the times that the work of Carpenter, the Cato libertarian isolationist, should be prominently displayed in a recent issue of *Foreign Policy*, originally founded as the establishmentarian vehicle for the propagation of the Vietnam-era neoisolationist creed. Whatever its ideological wellsprings, though, isolationism is back; and considering its resonance with deep-running currents in the national culture and psyche, to ignore it is preemptively to concede the argument to it.

THE most visible challenge to the new isolationism has been mounted by a cadre of academics and commentators who might be styled the "democratic internationalists." This cluster of opinion, which emphasizes the inescapable necessity of American leadership in a newly unipolar world, and which stresses the possibility of that leadership's effectively creating the conditions for peace with freedom and security through the defense and advance of democracy, includes representatives from chastened liberalism (Joseph S. Nye, Jr. of the Kennedy School at Harvard), neoconservatism (the columnist Charles Krauthammer and Joshua Muravchik of the American Enterprise Institute), and the Kemp wing of the Republican party (Gregory Fossedal of the Hoover Institution).

The democratic internationalists insist that theirs is an analysis shorn of the moralistic illusions often associated (rightly or wrongly) with Woodrow Wilson and (quite rightly) with Franklin D. Roosevelt. And indeed, the democratic internationalists tend to be far more skeptical of international organizations and institutions than the liberal internationalists of the interwar and postwar periods. In the post-cold-war, unipolar world of the 1990's and beyond, the democratic internationalists argue, the alternative to American leadership is not multipolarity, but chaos.

Moreover, the democratic internationalists maintain that the Reagan Doctrine—of vigorous support for democratic forces, whether in Chile, Afghanistan, or Poland—was not simply an interim or emergency measure whose rationale was provided by its repulsive mirror image, the Brezhnev Doctrine. Rather, democratic internationalists see the post-cold-war task of the United States—defending democratic allies and resisting aggression by crazy states where necessary; promoting democratic transitions where possible; and supporting democratic consolidation in countries formerly run by commissars or caudillos—as emerging from the very nature of the United States itself (a country founded on certain claims about the inalienable rights of the human person), from America's successful leadership of the Party of Freedom in World War III (the cold war), and

from a prudent calculation of the national interest.

Then there are the realists. The democratic internationalists claim to have learned from the critique of Wilsonian idealism mounted by the realist school of the 1930's and 1940's, but several prominent commentators who self-consciously identify with that critique beg to differ. Irving Kristol, Owen Harries, and Robert W. Tucker (all of the *National Interest*), Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, and Henry Kissinger do not agree on everything (neither, for that matter, do Krauthammer and Nye, much less Harkin and Buchanan). But they do seem at one in thinking that the democratic-internationalist proposal is too optimistic in its reading of the possibilities at the end of the 20th century, too sanguine about the relationship between democracy and international cooperation, and too little attentive to the fundamental conflicts that still define the fault lines in international public life today.

The realist counter-proposal, for a return to "normalcy" in the conduct of our foreign policy, is built around the concept of the "national interest," which is defined in political-military and economic terms. The realists are not autarkists. While they would cringe at the word "interdependence," they understand the facts of modern international economic life, and they take seriously the claim that the Great Depression was caused at least in part by the tariff wars of the 1920's. The realists are not, in other words, isolationists with a big stick and an aggressive exports policy.

On the other hand, the realists deny that defining the national interest involves calculations beyond the strictly political-military and economic. They stress the limits of American power and the inevitability of chaos and unpredictability in world politics. They understand that "intractable" is a sad but accurate description of the nature of certain conflicts (such as the Middle East). And they have grave doubts about the willingness of the American people to support (and pay for) a democratic internationalism whose immediate benefits to the United States, particularly in an era of domestic austerity, collapsing infrastructure, and massive trade imbalances, are not immediately evident.

II

IN THE world of ideas, the outcome of this triangular debate among the isolationists, the democratic internationalists, and the realists is still undecided, but in the world of policy it is realism that is winning. Yet the realism that has quietly emerged at the higher altitudes of the Bush administration as a strategic frame of reference is a particularly constrained, even wizened, version of the doctrine. For George Bush and his people, the New World Order is not to be understood, in even a chastened or tough-minded way, in Wilsonian terms—i.e., as a matter

of American leadership in the construction of an international political community. Rather, Bush's New World Order resembles nothing so much as the Concert of Europe between, roughly, the Congress of Vienna (1815) and the Franco-Prussian War (1870).

In this respect, Bush-administration realism is far more akin to classic European *Realpolitik* than it is to the realism of, say, Reinhold Niebuhr or even Dean Acheson, both of whom were deeply influenced by biblical concepts of the inherent irony, pathos, and tragedy of the human condition, and by Augustine's seminal distinction between the City of God and the earthly city. So it is probably a good idea to distinguish the Bush approach—call it “conventional realism”—from the more richly textured realism of Niebuhr and Acheson and their contemporary heirs like Kissinger, Kristol, Harries, and Kirkpatrick.

Conventional realism *à la* Bush has several defining characteristics. It seems, first, quite leery about committing the United States to the pursuit of any great principle in the conduct of our foreign policy. Indeed, one of the striking things about the President's repeated call for a New World Order is the lack of content in the operative word, “order” (the same is true for the President's pursuit of “peace”). Thus it should have come as no surprise that, in his September 1991 address to the United Nations General Assembly, less than a month after the new Russian revolution, Mr. Bush carefully avoided rhetoric that could be construed as endorsing the claim that the events of recent years had been an unprecedented triumph for Western conceptions of human rights and a dramatic confirmation of the superiority of democracy as a political system. (Perhaps the thought of a Saudi presiding over the General Assembly made the White House speechwriters even more circumspect than usual.) The President did say soothing (and unexceptionable) things about free markets and free politics. But there was no ideological or moral passion evident in his rather flaccid address.

The Reagan Doctrine, which was about the struggle between ideas and values as much as it was about the clash of interests, seems as dead in the Bush administration as it would have been under Michael Dukakis. The Bush men have even seemed at times to be going out of their way to distinguish their “pragmatic” approach to the world from the more “ideological” style of the previous administration. And while there may well be something to be said for the realist critique of general moral principles as tactical policy guides (given the endless complexities and imponderabilities of world politics), the failure to articulate the meaning of such terms as “peace” and “order”—and thereby to lend some guiding shape to the definition and execution of policy—tends to yield an American approach to the world reminiscent of Winston Churchill's famous descrip-

tion of a disappointing dessert: “This pudding lacks a theme.”

Then there is the President's much-remarked fondness for personal diplomacy. Realism has always been skeptical of popular and congressional involvement in the foreign-policy process (and, on the evidence supplied by Congress over the past twenty years, not without reason). But Bush seems to have sharpened this aspect of realism to an especially fine point, not least in his successful and admirable creation of the broad coalition that challenged Saddam Hussein and ejected him from Kuwait. Conversely, however, the strength of the President's personal diplomacy under certain circumstances has not infrequently been transformed into a weakness when circumstances changed. The Emir of Kuwait and the Saudi royal family were far more cooperative before February 28, 1991 than they have been afterward. That was, perhaps, to be expected. But can we not wonder whether the personalization of the relationship between President Bush and these allies made it more difficult than necessary to keep them on board when the issue became winning the peace rather than winning the war?

IN SO FAR as it has a guiding concept, the Bush administration's instinctive passion seems to be for “stability.” It is here that the President and his foreign-policy advisers most resemble the statesmen at the Congress of Vienna. Like Metternich, Castlereagh, and Talleyrand, President Bush, Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d, and National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft are men made profoundly uncomfortable by revolutionary ideas, and indeed by revolutionaries—and yet they are responsible for U.S. foreign policy in an age of revolution. Here, the issue of personalization intersects with the administration's insistence on stability: confronted with the choice between reform Communist and centralizer Mikhail Gorbachev on the one side, and radical democrat and decentralizer Boris Yeltsin on the other, the administration unhesitatingly chose Gorbachev. (Even more oddly, but just as predictably, the President and his men got around to recognizing the Baltic Republics, whose independence the United States had asserted for 50 years, only after Iceland and Denmark.)

Perhaps the best way to sum up the conventional realism of the Bush administration is to say that it is a realism deeply skeptical of ideology and its role in the affairs of men and nations. This seems curious (as the realist Owen Harries has himself noted) in the age of Lenin, Hitler, Mao, and Pol Pot; of Gandhi and the Fabian professoriate at the London School of Economics in the 1930's; of Churchill and the founders of the state of Israel; and, more recently, of Havel, Michnik, and Wojtyla. That ideas have consequences is a cliché whose truth has been proven beyond cavil over the past century, and not least in international affairs. But it is a truth that seems not to

have much impressed itself upon the minds and hearts of the conventional realists of the Bush administration.

THIS profound skepticism about ideology—and particularly the ideology of democratization and its roots in the Reagan Doctrine—seems the best explanation for the administration's actions (or inactions) at four defining moments over the past three years.

Tiananmen Square. Critics of the Bush administration's response to the shooting of nonviolent, pro-democracy Chinese dissidents in Peking's Tiananmen Square in June 1989 have sometimes suggested that the administration had within its power the capacity to bring down the regime of Deng Xiaoping and thus to usher in a democratic era in China. Yet what one sensed at the time now seems even clearer in retrospect: China has not yet developed that critical mass of "civil society" that made the revolution of 1989 in Central and Eastern Europe and the new Russian revolution of August 1991 possible.

That being said, however, the administration's response to the Dengist repression was distressingly tepid, and illustrated the perils of both a self-consciously amoral or *Realpolitik* policy calculus (our interests could be best pursued with the repressors) and the personalization of diplomacy (the President and Deng were old friends). The administration could and ought to have declared its support, and even enthusiasm, for the goals of the student dissidents and their nonviolent methods; they were, after all, modeling their revolution explicitly on ours, and the icon they erected in the square, the "Goddess of Democracy," was deliberately evocative of a familiar statue in New York harbor.

What would such a declaration by Bush have accomplished? It might have provided a minimum of protection to the students, by signaling Deng and his gerontocratic comrades that they would pay a steep price for repression. It might have strengthened the hand of reformist forces (and they do exist) within the Chinese Communist party—precisely the party forces we ought to encourage in the run-up to a post-Deng China. It might have positioned the United States for a brokerage role in the scramble for power—which could well involve massive civil unrest—that will follow Deng's departure for the bosom of Lenin. It might, in other words, have created conditions for the possibility of American leadership in assisting the process of de-Stalinization in China.

Instead, by its emphasis on stability, and by its subsequent insistence on maintaining most-favored-nation trading status for the Dengist PRC, the Bush administration has effectively removed the United States from the calculations of the chief actors in the unfolding drama of China. The Dengists do not fear us, and are thus far less likely to change their ways. The reformists do not quite trust us, and thus we will have less leverage with

them in the post-Deng power sweepstakes. And the radical democrats feel betrayed. In the name of stability, the Bush administration seems to have helped create circumstances in which the prospects for an orderly transition beyond Deng have been sadly diminished.

The Endgame in Iraq. President Bush's masterful assembly of the anti-Saddam coalition after the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait, his firm resistance to the pusillanimity of the Democratic congressional leadership, and the effective conduct of the air and ground wars against Iraq between January 16 and February 28, 1991—none of these accomplishments can, or should, be gainsaid. What is troubling, however, and precisely in terms of parsing the administration's conventional realism, is what happened before August 2, 1990, and after February 28, 1991.

Prior to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the Bush administration seemed bent on engaging Saddam Hussein as a potential ally in the pursuit of a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement. Counsels to the contrary—counsels that stressed the nature of the Iraqi Baathist regime and the pathologies of Saddam himself—were ignored, presumably on the grounds that Saddam was the major Arab military power in the region and thus had to be dealt with. (As Lyndon Johnson would have put it, it was better to have Saddam "inside the tent pissing out than outside pissing in.")

Accordingly, Americans, and the rest of the world as well, were treated to the spectacle of the now-infamous April Glaspie interview, in which the Iraqi dictator was assured by the U.S. ambassador that we were not about to take a position on intra-Arab disputes, such as Saddam's claims on Kuwait. That Ambassador Glaspie's message to Saddam—both the text and the subtext—was of a piece with views long prevalent in the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs does not mitigate the damage done by the administration on this front. For it was within the administration's power, particularly as the cold war was declining and the unipolar nature of power in the world was coming into clearer focus, to challenge the appeasement strategies that State had been urging, precisely in the name of creating conditions (psychological as well as political-military) more conducive to the pursuit of a genuine peace.

That the President and his men responded so forcefully to a crisis which they had, in part, helped bring about is to their credit. It is easy to imagine several of the Democratic candidates in 1988 adopting precisely the pre-August 1990 approach taken by the Bush administration, and then, after the invasion of Kuwait, waiting for sanctions to work. And waiting. And waiting. The Bush administration did, not just the expedient thing but the right thing in mounting Desert Shield and Desert Storm. And the decision to eject Saddam from Kuwait by military means if nec-

essary was couched in precisely the right terms: as a matter of obligation as well as of necessity.

But then, with Saddam hanging on to power by the thinnest of threads, Bush's policy seemed to lurch back to the orthodoxies of conventional realism. To be sure, there was a concern within senior administration circles that the relentless pursuit of the Iraqi army out of Basra would have led to a breach of the Just-War principle of proportionality. But there were options between what amounted to a unilateral ceasefire and rolling the tanks up to Baghdad. Moreover, it now seems ever more obvious that the endgame policy was being driven by other concerns: by, once again, concerns about stability.

Thus, the Saudis were reported to be nervous about the break-up of Iraq and the possible creation of a Shiite state (or autonomous region) in southern Iraq. So, it was said, were the Turks—with the Kurds as the potential problem child in the north of Iraq, along the Turkish border. The decision was therefore made to stop military action; to preserve the Iraqi state and the Baathist regime in their present form; and to hope that, somehow, Saddam would be removed from power by the normal means for the transfer of power in the Middle East: assassination and/or coup.

But when that hope proved vain, the administration was even prepared to let Saddam and his Baathist thugs slaughter Shiites and Kurds by the tens of thousands, in the name of preserving the stability that a unitary Iraq, under Baathist leadership, would putatively help create in the region. Charles Krauthammer put it sharply but accurately when he wrote in *Time* that Bush's "first choice was Saddamism without Saddam. But his second choice was Saddamism with Saddam." The reason for that otherwise inexplicable choice was that it was demanded by the administration's version of conventional realism.

Yugoslavia. If Yugoslavia—a nation-state in name only, a misbegotten child of the Versailles Peace Conference now coming apart under the inexorable pressures generated by the Communist manipulation of ancient ethnic and religious feuds—graphically illustrates the perils of Wilsonianism, Bush-administration policy toward that unhappy land has been a poignant reminder that the fundamental principle of sound diplomacy should be the same as the basic principle of sound medicine: first, do no harm.

That Yugoslavia was in dire straits, indeed on the verge of civil war, by the summer of 1991 ought to have been evident to any informed observer. Yet Secretary Baker went to Belgrade in June and defined America's interest in Yugoslavia as the maintenance of stability and order. Not without reason, this was seen by the Serbian Communists then in control of the Yugoslav federal leadership and the federal army as a signal that the United States would not object to a little head-knocking, if that was what it would take to preserve the

unitary Yugoslav state. Shortly after Baker's visit, Ljubljana became the first European city to be bombed since 1945.

Could the United States have prevented a civil war in Yugoslavia? Perhaps not. But Baker's ill-advised realist emphasis on stability made civil war more, not less, likely. Worse yet, it strengthened the hand of the very man who is the chief obstacle to a peaceful resolution of the Yugoslav dilemma, the Serbian Stalinist Slobodan Milosevic. Had Baker stressed that America's interest lay in a peaceful, democratic, nonviolent, and negotiated settlement of the crisis (even if that meant a radical restructuring of "Yugoslavia"), and had he challenged the Yugoslavs to emulate the success of their Slavic brethren in carrying out just such revolutions in Poland and Czechoslovakia, things just might have been different. Instead, and two years after the revolution of 1989, we gave effective support to one of the few remaining Communist leaders in Eastern Europe. The bloodletting followed in short order.

Gorbachev, Yeltsin, and the August Revolution. Stability, rather than democracy and nonviolent change, has been, yet again, the watchword for Bush-administration policy toward the Soviet Union. That policy has also been shaped in considerable part by Bush's evident fondness for Mikhail Gorbachev, and his advisers' nervousness about the less "clubbable" Boris Yeltsin. But the element of personality does not fully account for the way in which Bush came down strongly on the side of Gorbachev's centralist reform Communism in the paradigmatic formulation of the administration's pre-August-revolution perspective—his August 1 address to the Ukrainian parliament in Kiev, which William Safire of the *New York Times* acidly dubbed the "Chicken Kiev speech." That speech, with its dire warnings against the perils of "suicidal nationalism," may well appear, in time, to be the most comprehensive statement of the conventional-realist position—and the most telling example of that position's failure to grasp the meaning and power of the ideas and passions that drove politics during the break-up of the external and internal Soviet empires.

The pattern established by the Chicken Kiev speech was maintained throughout the August revolution. In the early going, the President was just right: calm, measured, quietly defiant. But in the wake of Yeltsin's victory in Moscow, Bush seemed as little able as Gorbachev to comprehend that a sea-change had taken place in the correlation of forces within what was rapidly becoming the former USSR. Once again, the rhetorical weight was on stability, with virtually no presidential acknowledgment that what was under way throughout the Soviet Union was a great triumph for Western political values. The President did celebrate the triumph of democracy when the coup imploded. But he immediately went on to suggest, against the evidence of Gor-

bachev's own astonishing press conference (in which he defended the Communist party he would abandon 24 hours later), that "democracy" and "Gorbachev" were somehow synonymous. Then there was the President's petulance about the demands for diplomatic recognition coming from the Baltic states, his deprecatory references to Ukrainian democrats, and his staffers' off-the-record trashing of Boris Yeltsin as a crude and unstable demagogue who threatened, yes, the supreme value of stability.

In the weeks following the August revolution, as in his phone-a-thon prior to the September announcement of nuclear-weapons cuts, the President seemed to move toward a recognition of Yeltsin's position and stature as, minimally, co-leader with Gorbachev of whatever-it-was that the late Soviet Union had become. Then, in late November and early December, Gorbachev's inability to meet his payroll and the voters of Ukraine finally forced the administration's hand. But until then, it was the Chicken Kiev speech, with its stress on the importance of maintaining "the center" (at precisely the time when the center was being revealed as a fiction), that was the chief intellectual template against which post-Soviet U.S. policy toward the collapsed superpower was being measured and cut.

SOME might argue that this cautious approach to the post-Soviet endgame—as well as to the events in Tiananmen Square, during the last phase of Desert Storm, and on the brink of the Yugoslav civil war—is but the application of that chief of political virtues, prudence, to policy-making in a volatile period in world affairs.

Yet what the administration imagines to have been the prudent call in these four instances has proved to be anything but, if by prudence we mean the skill of applying principle to practice in a way that allows for the maximum possible embodiment of that principle in the political order, within the limits imposed by circumstances. The People's Republic of China has become a more repressive place, farther removed from reform and just as troublesome in the world arms markets, in the wake of the administration's tepid response to the Tiananmen Square shootings. Saddam Hussein is still in power in Baghdad, and is still pursuing a nuclear-weapons capability: this is stability? Yugoslavia has been plunged into civil war. And the United States seems increasingly out of touch with those who are going to be running the post-Soviet Union in the future.

In sum, given the revolutionary circumstances with which our policy has had to come to grips, the stress the administration has put on stability has been precisely the *imprudent* call.

III

THE Bush administration's imprudent pursuit of a "prudent" foreign policy illustrates the first of the three chief defects of

conventional realism: its inability to deliver success, even (or especially) as measured by its own definition of success.

Conventional realism rightly promises no rose gardens; but it does promise that diplomacy can produce stability, which is the best that can be hoped for in this kind of world. And yet, as we have just seen from the record of the Bush administration, it is precisely stability that conventional realism fails to produce. The root of that failure lies in conventional realism's blindness to the power of ideas—of ideology—in world politics, and the capacity of peoples motivated by ideas and moral passions to bend history to their wills. Thanks to this crippling myopia (which is rooted in the belief that the world of ideas is epiphenomenal to the "real world" of economic and military power), conventional realism has missed the *sine qua non* of the revolution of 1989 in Central and Eastern Europe and the August revolution in the late Soviet Union: the revolution of the spirit, the revolution of conscience, that preceded and made possible the (largely nonviolent) overthrow of Communist power.

This grave weakness in the intellectual armamentarium of conventional realism should not surprise anyone familiar with the diplomatic history of the 20th century. Conventional realists were, after all, in charge at 10 Downing Street and in the French Foreign Ministry when the most urgent questions of the day were: who is Hitler and what does he want? Conventional realism, incapable of grasping revolutionary ideologies and passions, fundamentally misconstrued Hitler who, it was said, had legitimate, post-Versailles grievances which could be redressed by "appeasement" (a good word, then). The same incapacity to comprehend the revolutionary mindset, this time in the case of Stalin, crippled Western strategy and diplomacy from the Teheran conference through Yalta.

The second failure of conventional realism is its misunderstanding of morality, and particularly of the moral reasoning appropriate to statecraft. Conventional realism, with its pretense of tough-mindedness, denies that the world of politics has a normative content: politics is, at best, amoral, and international politics is even more the arena of the amoral than domestic affairs. The only calculus that counts in foreign policy is a calculus of national interest, and those charged with the responsibility of securing that interest are somehow thought to have been absolved from grappling with the question, "But what *ought* we to do?" At its most perfervid, conventional realism even imputes a kind of stoic grandeur to the lonely amoralism of the statesman; as the eminent realist Hans J. Morgenthau once put it, "To know with despair that the political act is inevitably evil, and to act nevertheless, is moral courage."

In fact, however, this is not moral courage, but rather a particularly offensive form of melodramatics. The philosopher Charles Frankel took

Morgenthau to task for his bloviated formulation at just the right level of analysis:

Professor Morgenthau is pointing only to the fact that man cannot have or do everything he wants, that he must choose, and that he must do so though inadequately informed and equipped. To turn these not entirely recondite facts into evidence for the proposition that politics is no place for ethics is a resounding non sequitur. Human fallibility and choice are not evil. They are the conditions that make the moral life, and therefore both good and evil, possible.

Conventional realism is, then, defective as a moral theory. It considers the norms appropriate for decision-making in interpersonal relationships the sum total of the meaning of morality and then, finding these inapplicable to politics among nations, declares foreign policy to be the realm of the amoral calculation of interest. In this, conventional realism resembles (and in fact probably derives in no small part from) that form of American evangelical Protestant moralism that drove a wedge between morality and politics by insisting that the former was solely derived from the norms of the Sermon on the Mount. But as the vigorous Just-War debate that preceded Desert Storm illustrated, there are other sources of moral understanding—preeminent among them the natural law—and these can provide far more supple instruments for serious moral analysis of the exigencies of statecraft.

Finally, on this point, the conventional realists' insistence that the national interest is the sole concern of the statesman tends to ignore the fact that the calculation of what constitutes the national interest is itself an exercise in moral judgment, not an exercise in algebra. It inevitably involves choices among desiderata, choices that are inescapably involved with issues of "ought." Once again, it was Charles Frankel who got this exactly right:

The heart of the decision-making process . . . is not the finding of the best means to serve a national interest already perfectly known and understood. It is the determining of that interest itself: the reassessment of the nation's resources, needs, commitments, traditions, and political and cultural horizons—in short, its calendar of values.

Conventional realism of the European/*Realpolitik* sort is thus not an escape from morality; it is a defective and deficient form of morality. Nor is the alternative to conventional realism utopianism or idealism run amok. The alternative is better moral reasoning. It is an approach to the construction of foreign policy that grasps ideas and values as motivators of men and nations; that takes seriously the distinctive nature of social

ethics, and particularly its necessary concern for consequences; and that does not throw up its hands in despair over the inevitable fact that there is going to be a gap between our ideals and their implementation in the doing of our business with the world.

THE third disability of conventional realism is its incapacity to engage the imagination and commitment of the American people. Conventional realism does not suit the political temper of a people whose constituting experience as a political community involved the assertion of universal moral norms. A nation founded on ideas and values cannot but make those ideas and values a formative part of its encounter with the world.

Margaret Thatcher used to distinguish between "conviction politicians" and "consensus politicians." The United States, for good and for ill and usually for both, is a conviction nation. Our convictions cannot determine policy in all particulars. There are limits to our capabilities, and there are limits posed by the intractabilities of situations, cultures, and personalities in the world. On occasion, for example, we may have to enter (or even lead) coalitions with partners whose politics we find odious.

But the real danger is not that we will somehow lose our innocence in such ventures. Americans are not so naive as that. Moreover, the arguments of the democratic internationalists, given added weight by the empirical evidence of democracy's power as an energizing principle in politics within and among nations, and sharpened by the cautions of the more developed realist thinkers like Kristol, Harries, Kissinger, and Kirkpatrick, will continue to offer a potent analytic framework for conceiving ways to bridge the inevitable gaps between what our convictions would lead us to want to do, and what the circumstances of a given situation require of us.

Contrary to much assumed wisdom (of the kind that thinks of itself as tough-minded and pragmatic, rather than idealistic and ideological), the fact of those gaps is no reason to fall back into the false intellectual and political safety net of conventional realism. Indeed, the real danger in the 1990's is that the Bush administration's experiments with principle-free *Realpolitik* will so estrange our foreign policy from the deepest convictions of the American people that they will retreat in disgust (or, at the very least, confusion) into the kind of hemispheric bunker now being designed by Buchanan and his tribe. And thus the great irony is that the conventional realism of an administration which prides itself on its expertise in dealing with the world may yet become a new road—the upmarket road—to the very isolationism it seeks to avoid.

The Democrats' Dilemma

Lawrence M. Mead

SINCE the late 1960's, a sea change has come over American politics. Republicans have dominated presidential elections as thoroughly as Democrats did in earlier decades. More important, there has been a shift in the main issues in domestic policy. The old disputes over economic equality and government control of the economy that dominated New Deal politics have been displaced by a debate over how to deal with entrenched poverty in the inner city. Today—contrary to Kevin Phillips—economic redistribution is effectively off the agenda; politicians argue instead about how to restore the order and competence at the bottom of society that the earlier, class politics took for granted. On these issues of social order and “values,” unlike on earlier size-of-government disputes, the GOP commands a majority.

Most liberals and most Democrats would love to return to a politics centered on economic equality. Some of them believe that the issue will soon be back on the agenda anyway, because economic inequality is rising. In their view, the Reagan and Bush eras have created an offensive new plutocracy, while real wages have declined for many ordinary workers. Americans, they say, are bound to rise up and demand redress, and they believe that the 1992 election may be fought on just this ground.

Short of an economic collapse, however, this is an implausible scenario. The trigger for redistributive movements in the United States has typically been not inequality but unemployment. Americans have demanded change when they could not support themselves at all, not when they were simply paid less than other people. Today, the labor market is tightening as job creation outpaces a slowly growing labor force. Even in the current recession unemployment has been relatively low, and Democrats have been unable to make much out of it. Voters are complaining about stagnant incomes much more than about joblessness. For most Americans in most years, the risk of unemployment is simply too small to cause major domestic concern.

Americans are more upset by something else: the failure of government to discharge its most elementary functions. Most people would be satisfied, the political scientist Thomas Cavanagh says, “if government could simply do the things it used to do well: educating children, repairing roads, and keeping criminals off the streets.” These things are now hard to do, chiefly on account of worsening social conditions in the cities. On the way to a more redistributive politics, the ghetto is the lion in the path.

THIS is the Democrats' dilemma: they do not approve of the disorders of the ghetto, but they find it impossible clearly to disapprove of them. Restrained by a fear of seeming to force values on cultural and racial minorities, they seldom condemn bad behavior openly, or invoke public authority against it. This failure to face the issues that preoccupy the public goes back some years now, and (to quote a recent statement by the man who was the issues director for Walter Mondale's 1984 presidential campaign) it “helps explain political developments at the national level during the past generation: the Democratic party has virtually ceded the terrain of popular values to the Republicans.”

Democrats are now in the classic “me-too” position of a minority party. The Republicans have taken a popular stand on a potent issue, and thus become the majority party. The minority party believes in the opposite position, and would like to assert it, but would be cast into the wilderness for its pains. Alternatively, it could take a stance closer to the majority in order to have a shot at power, but it would then lose its distinctive identity.

Up through the mid-1960's, Republicans were themselves in this position. Big-government programs were popular, and were associated with Democrats. The GOP opposed them at its peril; but the party could not accept big government, as some liberal Republicans advised, without abandoning its reason for being. Today, barring an economic collapse, Democrats would have to be tough on crime and welfare to take over the White House, but this would require them to abandon the social positions that have become distinctively Democratic.

The dilemma is deep-seated. No superficial change in proposals or candidates can overcome

LAWRENCE M. MEAD is associate professor of politics at New York University and the author of *Beyond Entitlement*. His new book, *The New Politics of Poverty: The Nonworking Poor in America*, upon which the present article is based, will be brought out by Basic Books in April.

it. On the issues raised by the enduring dependency of many urban poor, there is a real difference of view between Democratic leadership groups and the voting public. Most liberals believe that less can or should be expected in the way of work and other civilities from the poor than most voters want. Americans (according to a committee advising the centrist Democratic Leadership Council) are fed up with the liberal "language of compensation." They want to hear about "middle-class values—individual responsibility, hard work, equal opportunity."

THE Democratic dilemma is typical of a period, like our own, when basic social values are in question. Politically, the issue of citizenship and the proper definition of the community is prior to the question of class and equality. This favors conservatives, as it has repeatedly done over the nation's life. Conservatives lead today just as they did in the period of the founding and later during the Civil War and its aftermath, when Republicans controlled Washington more fully than they do now. Only after Americans had established their political identity could questions of social fairness be addressed. Then and only then did Presidents Jefferson, Jackson, Wilson, and the two Roosevelts sweep conservatives out of office in the name of struggling farmers, workers, and the "little man."

We think of Democrats as having made the civil-rights issue their own in recent years, but on a longer view it is really the Republicans' destiny to deal with race, as it is the Democrats' to deal with class. Although Democrats enacted most of the civil-rights laws of the 60's, it turned out that getting whites to deal with blacks more fairly in formal ways was relatively easy. It has proved much harder to equip poor blacks and other minorities to prosper in fairer competition. Many have reacted in effect by seceding from mainstream institutions—breaking the law, dropping out of school, not learning English, declining to work. This internal secession is no less threatening to the country than the more formal secession of the South in 1861.

The parallels between the parties' reactions to the two conflicts are uncanny. Just as Democrats tried, in vain, to hold onto the South by deferring to Southern politicians, so they defer to black leaders today. It is Republicans who have resisted the new secession, as they did the old. The GOP leads the new struggle in part because it is more willing to exert public authority. Republicans also lead because, as before, they are more unified in their cause. Today as before, part of the Democrats' constituency is among the secessionists. Republicans do not depend much today on black votes, as they earlier did not depend on the South, and they are hence freer to press the battle. This unity is one reason why, as in 1860, they find themselves in the White House even though more Americans are Democrats than Republicans.

How have Democrats responded to their dilemma? One superficial tactic has been to appear tough on the same social issues that have proved so telling for Republicans at the polls. During the 1988 campaign, Democratic candidates identified themselves with "working people," something they had no need to do before 1960. They were sure to have themselves photographed among unemployed factory workers or distressed farmers; they described traditional social programs as benefits not for the poor but for "working families" or, in the case of welfare, for "children."

George Bush easily trumped these appeals. He used the Pledge of Allegiance to identify his party with American values, and to suggest that Democrats were soft on those values. The next year, when, on grounds of free speech, the Supreme Court disallowed laws punishing the desecration of the flag, Bush and other Republicans promptly called for a federal law to protect the flag and, when that too was disallowed, a constitutional amendment. Some Democrats joined in, loath once again to appear behindhand.

In 1990, the Senate voted a crime bill that was supposed to rescue Democrats from the imputations of permissiveness that Bush had levied to such effect in 1988. Among other provisions, the bill extended capital punishment over a wider range of offenses, and also limited the number of appeals that persons sentenced to death could make to the federal courts. "This is the toughest, most comprehensive crime bill in our history," announced Democratic Senator Joseph Biden, chairman of the Judiciary Committee. "Willie Horton is back in jail, figuratively speaking." But then other Democrats weakened the effect by opposing capital punishment in general or, at least, in cases where race might have influenced sentencing. Their proposals, defeated in the Senate, received more support in the House, where a "racial-justice" amendment was added. Some House Democrats derided the new rules, prompting a Bush threat of a veto. These moves showed that, however tough Democrats talked, they would inevitably appear softer on law enforcement than the GOP.

Another option for the Democrats has been to try to avoid the social problem by putting forward a narrowly economic program. Thus, "neoliberals" propose that Washington actively enhance national economic competitiveness through tax breaks for business innovation, promotion of exports, and heavier investment in education and infrastructure. The United States, they say, should have an explicit "industrial policy" that favors change and growth, rather than assume that the magic of the market, plus today's disjointed subsidies, will do the job. This program, the work of Robert Reich and other liberal economists, formed the centerpiece of Gary Hart's presidential campaigns in 1984 and 1988. In the current campaign, Paul Tsongas, among Democratic contenders, most clearly takes this approach.

Whatever the economic merits of these ideas, they are politically problematic. Critics on the Left complain that if helping business becomes the Democrats' platform, there will be little to distinguish them from Republicans. Neoliberalism, in any event, is far too detached from any visceral appeal to ordinary people to succeed at the polls. Nor, more importantly, does it contain anything to assuage public concern over the decline of order and civility in American life. Welfare and other antipoverty benefits are central to these worries, yet most Democrats today avoid discussing those programs. Some speak of social spending as "investment," a word that sounds economic and hard-headed. But what the public wants to hear from the Democrats is not an economic language but a moral language that links benefits with obligations. These are not terms in which most Democrats find it comfortable to speak.

A MORE effective strategy for Democrats might be to return to the explicit appeals to class that generated liberal presidential majorities in the decades before 1968. This is the advice of Robert Kuttner and some other thinkers. They hope to break the grip of social issues on the domestic debate by (in Michael Katz's words) pulling public discourse "away from family and toward power."

According to Kuttner, "nonrich" Americans have forgotten what government does for them. Benefits such as Social Security and Medicare are taken for granted today. Social programs are associated only with the poor, hence are unpopular. Ordinary people have few hopes that government can improve their lives, so they are less interested in politics than they once were, and they vote less. As a result, the relative power of the affluent has grown.

A Democratic majority can be restored, Kuttner and others say, only if the party recovers its "populist" heritage and appeals openly for "economic justice." That means offering to the non-rich the sorts of additional benefits that once cemented their attachment to "affirmative government." Programs targeted only on the poor will always command little support, but new entitlements could serve to attract the broad public, including the poor. Kuttner proposes new health, child-care, and housing programs, plus enriched unemployment benefits. He would regulate business to improve job security and embrace "economic planning" to protect the American economy to some extent from international pressures. Among this year's Democratic candidates, Tom Harkin, with his rabble-rousing rhetoric and his appeals to economic nationalism, comes the closest to this style of thinking.

Politically, however, a program of new curbs on business—investment controls, restraints on plant closings, etc.—is prohibitive to sell. It sounds like the sort of state direction of production that has been discredited in most of the

developed world. How can one contend seriously for a governmental economy when such a system has just been overthrown in the Soviet bloc and, in less extreme forms, questioned in Western Europe?

The more appealing side of the Kuttner program is its promise of new entitlements for the middle class. The idea is to complement the existing social-insurance benefits, which go mainly to the elderly and disabled, with programs to serve the practical needs of the working-aged. Such ideas continue along the path of liberal reformism that was interrupted by the economic pressures of the last decades and by the new and seemingly intractable forms of poverty.

The potential appeal here is real, as the results of the last presidential election suggest. Although Michael Dukakis lost, he gained a hearing for his contention that government should make good on the recent deficiencies of the economy by raising the minimum wage, guaranteeing health and child care, helping to finance college educations, and subsidizing more affordable housing. Such class-oriented pitches, made toward the end of the campaign, did a lot more for Dukakis than his earlier appeals to managerial competence. Despite his defeat, Congress within two years raised the minimum wage as well as wage subsidies for low-income workers and voted several new child-care subsidies. Nothing is more popular than new benefits for working people.

The present-day costs of health care, higher education, and housing might well provide the grounds for a progressive reform crusade where a shortage of jobs no longer does. By stressing these vulnerabilities, particularly among the young, Democrats might at last rebuild the coalition they need to govern, one that unites the working and middle classes with the poor and dependent. The potential was shown in November of last year when Harris Wofford won a Senate seat for Democrats in Pennsylvania by running on the health-care issue.

But there is one crushing precondition to an entitlements strategy: its beneficiaries must be workers. There is no way, except by subterfuge, to extend it to the nonworking poor. Americans clearly want most new benefits, like most existing ones, to go to the "deserving," not the "undeserving." Yet if new entitlements exclude the nonworking, they will solve neither the economic problems of the poor nor the political problems Democrats face on their account.

That moral became clear in New Jersey, where James Florio, a liberal Democratic governor, assembled exactly the populist coalition critics like Kuttner speak of. Florio was elected in 1989 with a combination of urban and blue-collar votes, then used his mandate to push through stiff tax increases, mainly on the rich, in order to spend more on education and other services, chiefly in urban areas. Commentators applauded, but a backlash quickly mounted. Florio's working-class constit-

uents resented seeing so much of their money being spent on the crumbling cities they had left behind. They made their views felt in November's balloting, when Republicans seized control of the New Jersey state legislature.

NONE of these options deals directly with urban disorders, and that is their main limitation. Some moderate Democratic politicians, however, have begun to take positions on social policy that sound distinctly conservative. Democratic candidates Bill Clinton and Douglas Wilder talk of mainstream "values" and of expecting welfare clients to work. Some intellectuals have gone further, suggesting that a more authoritative stance might actually serve radical ends.

Mickey Kaus, himself a liberal, has written that recent liberal social thinking provides a poor rationale for governance. Liberal Democrats like Mario Cuomo want to help the poor and other vulnerable groups out of "compassion," but that appeal neglects the moral distinctions the public insists on drawing among claimants at the public trough; it suggests an "indiscriminate dispensing of cash in a sort of all-purpose socialized United Way campaign." Above all, it offers a "miserable basis for liberal politics," because it attributes to government clients the qualities only of "dependence and piteousness." A social policy based only on "charity" can never yield a society of "free, equal citizens."

This sort of unease has spurred renewed talk on the Left of the responsibilities of citizenship. The problem with the welfare state, the historian Fred Siegel says, is that it liberates people from responsibility for themselves but makes no demands, and thus has no "ethical core." Some have tried to resuscitate the idea of citizenship in its original sense as a force for revolutionary change. Barbara Ehrenreich, a feminist author, recently wrote that the Left could reverse the conservative political tide only by crafting "a genuinely radical alternative vision" based not only on the "redistribution of wealth" but on "the old small-R republican values of active citizenship."

Some of this talk never gets beyond generalities: intellectuals on the Left find it easier to affirm values rhetorically than actually to require people to obey them. For some critics, too, the main agenda of "citizenship" remains economic: the term is a code word for reversing Reaganite cuts in taxation and regulations and reasserting public control of the economy. Others, however, have developed detailed ideas of what a civic liberalism would amount to. Kaus, arguing that the Left has spent too much political capital on efforts to redistribute wealth and income, urges liberals to build up public institutions that compensate for economic inequality. Through improved schools, universal social services such as child or health care, and democratized local government, Americans could share a common life even if they had radically different incomes.

Unfortunately, the social problem once again quickly intrudes. Civic liberalism presumes that the middle class would want to inhabit, and to invest in, the same public spaces as the poor. But without more secure conditions in schools, streets, and parks, that is very doubtful. The problem of the underclass must first be solved.

Kaus accepts that the poor must be required to work, that standards must be raised in schools, and that law and order must be restored in cities. He has proposed to replace welfare with guaranteed jobs, a plan much like what some conservatives talk about. The Democratic Leadership Council, too, has attempted to promote work and family obligations as a basis for social policy. But all such efforts have met stiff resistance among other Democrats. In the crafting of the Family Support Act, the most recent reform of welfare, most Democrats in Congress accepted the need to strengthen work requirements for adult recipients, but they did not accept that participation in "workfare" programs should be mandatory. Most liberals support work or other requirements only in general terms—not specifically enough to make benefits truly conditional. Few intellectuals talk about enforcing social standards with anything but distaste.

The liberal aversion to authority assures that, for now, any more hard-headed form of liberalism will remain speculative. In response to Kaus, the conservative political theorist Mark Lilla wrote, "Until Democrats realize that citizenship sometimes means having to sit up straight and tie your shoes, civic liberalism will have no party to call its own."

ONE source of liberal and Democratic opposition to a more authoritative work policy is the belief that, if successful, it would shift American politics further to the Right. With more work and less dependency among the needy, the argument goes, the welfare state would shrink and society would return to a market basis where even the needy had to labor to survive. As more of the poor achieved some measure of advancement, the case for radical social change would be even weaker than it is now.

My own hunch is different. History shows that, as groups become more integrated, they make more demands on society. A poor population working at higher levels might retain many of its historic resentments, but would now have a much stronger claim on public sympathy, not to mention more income and more practical ability to contribute to political organization. The labor movement offers an example. Unions became major players in national politics not in the 19th century, when the movement was marginal and sometimes extremist, but in this century, when with greater numbers and legitimacy they were able to exact key concessions during the New Deal and succeeding Democratic administrations.

Once work levels rose among the low-income

class, a new politics of redress might appear first in an upsurge of labor organizing. One form might be more militant municipal unionism, already seen in cities like New York where ethnic groups have traditionally dominated one or another sector of the public service. More important would be a wave of new organizing in private-sector service industries that have recently provided the bulk of new employment for the low-skilled. These are not jobs that employers can easily shift to other regions or overseas, so they are ripe for organization. The next frontier could be elective politics. Overstressed new workers might funnel demands into the Democratic party or conceivably into a splinter party further to the Left. The new movement—Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition may prove a harbinger—would be an economic analogue to the civil-rights movement. Fledgling workers would demand protections like greater affirmative action but also enhanced benefits, job training, and other services.

Blacks would also have more power to push for change themselves. In July 1990, John E. Jacobs, president of the Urban League, called for an "Urban Marshall Plan" to invest in infrastructure and minority education and thus save America's cities. Appealing for help not only to whites, he pointed out that blacks now had a "critical mass" of middle-class and professional people to advance such a program on their own. Black "lawyers and computer experts, corporate managers and business people" were going to turn out to be "revolutionaries" in "suits and cuff-links." They would remember their heritage and demand redress for disadvantaged blacks left behind in the inner city.

If there is any plausibility to this scenario, why should *conservatives* be the ones pushing tough work and welfare politics today? The answer is that their concerns run deeper than the small-government agenda with which they have traditionally been identified. Today's conservatives defend, not simply the free economy but a vision of self-reliant individualism that they see as underlying the entire American, and Western, tradition. If that larger aim requires opening the door to increased collectivism, it is a price many feel worth paying.

WHEN the poverty problem appeared in the 1960's, what prevented a strategy of work enforcement was not so much the large numbers on Aid to Dependent Children and other welfare programs as the eruption of the new debate over dependency. For the first time, liberal politicians, intellectuals, and poverty lawyers were prepared to characterize nonworking adults as helpless victims who could not be expected to function. Conservatives countered with arguments for personal responsibility and "values"—arguments they seldom had to make in the decades before 1960, when the vast majority of working-

aged Americans supported families on their wages with little expectation of direct help from government. The dispute made it all but impossible to agree on social standards. Today, a national interest in raising work levels is clear, yet how to achieve that goal remains deeply controversial.

The poverty problem does not seem rooted in race, since poor and prosperous Americans alike are drawn from all racial groups, yet racial politics remains the most formidable obstacle to resolving it. The greatest political resource of those opposed to a more authoritative social policy is that most black leaders and notables agree with them, or at least acquiesce, even though these black leaders know the ravages that drugs, crime, and dependency have caused in low-income areas. It is hard for conservatives to institute enforcement measures, and for liberals even to advocate them, when black leaders decline to speak up publicly for enforcing moral and social standards.

The opponents of work-oriented reform policies may thus prevail, even in the teeth of legislative decisions. Already, local workfare officials report stiff opposition from poverty lawyers determined to litigate every step of the process by which recipients are obligated to participate in these programs and work. Amid constant legal and political challenges, the effort to enforce work and other civilities may grind to a halt. Progress may have to wait upon the emergence of a more conservative black leadership, willing to abandon the activists, reject racial excuses, and enforce behavioral norms in the name of integration.

AT BEST, work enforcement will involve a long struggle that is bound to strain the nation's political resolution. This second civil war will be as testing in its own way as the first, though less dramatic. The lethargy of the dependent may be too great for any policy to change. Yet the majority of Americans, black and white, continue to reject the ghetto's ethos of resignation. They continue to affirm both that individual effort is meaningful and that persons can be held accountable for their lives.

To exempt people from minimal standards of social behavior on grounds that they cannot cope tempts the poor, and others with them, toward a collective slough of despond. That way, most Americans feel, lies the abyss. The other way is to reassert, deliberately and constantly, the idea of responsibility. Precisely because it can no longer be assumed, responsibility must be willed, and promoted as a matter of explicit policy. Only by resisting passive poverty as firmly as the West resisted Communism can we hope for a day when most nonworking poor will accept that some opportunity exists for them and that they should seek it. Only then could the social problem recede. Only then could questions of economic equality receive a renewed prominence in American politics.

Freud's Jewish Problem

Robert Alter

FREUD'S *Moses and Monotheism* is surely one of the most curious last works of a major writer. He began its composition in Vienna in 1934, a year after Hitler's rise to power. Despite his own apprehensions about the reactions the book might elicit, in gravely failing health and with the world of Central Europe that had been his constant cultural context tumbling all around him, he pursued the idea of Moses, his ultimate literary project, for the next four years. Parts I and II, a little over a third of the whole, appeared in the psychoanalytic journal *Imago* in 1937. The book was published in London, where Freud had fled, simultaneously in German and in English translation, in 1939. It was the last year of his life.

For those inclined to view Freud as a nefariously influential intellectual charlatan, his freewheeling psychoanalytic speculations on the origins of monotheism offer smoking-gun evidence, or, as the inveterate anti-Freudian Vladimir Nabokov wrote to the editors of *Encounter* in the 1960's after the publication of another Freudian foray into psychohistory, they could be taken to "drive the last nail into the coffin of the Viennese witch doctor." A broad spectrum of less hostile critics have variously construed *Moses and Monotheism* as a document of Freud's ambivalence about his Jewishness or even as a climactic repudiation of his Jewish origins, and the temptations held out by this text to psychoanalyze the founder of psychoanalysis have proven more irresistible than those of any other

book he wrote, with the possible exception of *The Interpretation of Dreams*.

The double psychoanalytic plot Freud proposes in order to explain Moses does look like a provocation. (It is well to keep in mind that when he first began work on this project, he called it *The Man Moses, A Historical Novel*.) Weaving together certain heterodox hints from early 20th-century biblical scholarship with his own speculative scenario of the murder of a father-figure by a primal horde at the dawn of civilization, Freud read the account in Exodus against the grain to yield the following sequence of events: Moses was not in the least a Hebrew but rather an Egyptian nobleman, a fact rather clumsily disguised by the biblical authors. A follower of the monotheizing pharaoh Ikhnaton (Amonhotep IV), he brought this lofty new faith to the resident-alien Hebrews after his fellow Egyptians had resisted it, and he led them out into the wilderness where they could devote themselves to the exacting demands of his monotheistic cult. They on their part soon found the doctrine of their Egyptian leader too burdensome, rose up against him, and murdered him. This primal crime was then collectively repressed—not only in the memory of the people but also in the literary account of these founding events that they subsequently produced. About a century later, when the tribes were leading a nomadic existence in the Sinai, another Moses arose, whose name and identity became hopelessly confused with his Egyptian predecessor. A cruder and much more irascible type than the sophisticated Egyptian, he superimposed on the Aton of the first Moses a local volcano-god, probably indigenous to the "Arabic tribe of Midianites" (*sic*), named Yahweh. From this fusion and this era-

sure of memory follows the peculiar amalgam of the sublime and the primitive, of transcendent idealism and magical thinking, which, according to Freud, is the faith of the Hebrew Bible.

Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi's *Freud's Moses: Judaism Terrible and Interminable*,* a shrewd, scrupulously researched, and at times illuminating book, is wise in not expending any energy—with the partial exception of an apostrophe to Freud in the last chapter—to pull apart this web of dubious suppositions. In any case, the task has been abundantly performed ever since 1939 by biblical scholars, historians, and anthropologists. Yerushalmi also resists as a matter of principle any speculation about Freud's unconscious motives in writing *Moses and Monotheism*. At the outset, he tartly characterizes the concept of ambivalence as "that tired and evasive cliché," and he proceeds to demonstrate how much is to be gained by careful attention to Freud's actual intentions in his last book. What this process of attention chiefly reveals is that, for all the scandal to the faithful of Freud's thesis, he meant this book to be his ultimate Jewish affirmation. It was precisely for this reason that he felt driven to write it as the shadows of destruction gathered over European Jewry.

Yerushalmi has a wonderful eye for the assemblage of prooftexts from Freud's writings and obiter dicta. The pattern they show is a series of staunch declarations of Jewish identity by the private Freud and a leeriness in Freud the professional of any gesture that might make psychoanalysis appear to be what he called "a Jewish national affair." On the one hand, he could tell Max Graf, the father of the Little Hans of Freud's case history, "If you do not let your son grow up as a Jew, you will deprive him of those sources of energy which cannot be replaced by anything else." On the other hand, he could shamelessly court C.G. Jung in order to have a Christian and a pastor's son in his inner circle, and

* Yale University Press, 159 pp., \$25.00.

ROBERT ALTER is Class of 1937 Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley. His most recent book is *The World of Biblical Literature* (Basic Books).

he could affect in his writings to know little Yiddish and no Hebrew when, as Yerushalmi persuasively argues, there is evidence to the contrary. (Freud even pretended not to know what the word *menorah* meant—an inconceivable piece of ignorance given his family background, as Yerushalmi says. And then there is the puzzling matter of the florid Hebrew inscription—helpfully transcribed by Yerushalmi—made by Jakob Freud in the Bible he gave his son Sigmund on the latter's thirty-fifth birthday. Would the father have written this elaborate exhortation merely for show, with no expectation that his son could read it?) Although *Freud's Moses* does not quite put the matter in these terms, one might well describe *Moses and Monotheism* as an effort to bridge the gap between the private and the professional Freud, to affirm proudly the author's Jewish allegiance while remaining free of the opprobrium of Jewish parochialism. The effort could not entirely succeed, and that may explain the stubborn, pervasive oddness of the book.

The oddness is perhaps a little slighted in Yerushalmi's account because of his overriding, and salutary, concern with intentionality. But I think *Moses and Monotheism* is so fascinating precisely because it is so peculiar. It bristles with points of special pleading, excesses of insistence, imbalances of emphasis, wild and woolly inferences from the proffered evidence. Many of these features make sense not in terms of Freud's conscious project but rather as reflections of powerful impulses in the man behind the project, as manifestations of the strain of his trying to bridge incompatible aims. One need not pretend to psychoanalyze Freud to register these signs of strain.

It is not, for example, strictly necessary to Freud's argument that Moses be an Egyptian. The same plot of the murdered leader, the guilty repression of the act, and the subterranean preservation of his doctrine could be worked out if Moses were a Hebrew who had merely picked up his new teaching from the Egyptians or even had invented it himself. But one senses in reading that Freud had a deep

investment in demonstrating at all costs that Moses was an Egyptian, that circumcision was adopted by the Hebrews from the Egyptian practice, and that the monotheistic idea was entirely derived from the religious innovations of Ikhnaton. This investment is detectable both in the violence Freud does to the available historical evidence and in the inordinate amount of space he devotes to the demonstration of a point which is after all superfluous to his main argument.

THERE was obviously something very appealing to Freud in the notion of a leader of the Jewish people who did not really belong to it, who had nobler origins, and this notion goes hand in hand with the strokes of rhetorical vehemence in his portrayal of the Hebrews ("the savage Semites," as he calls them). Though Moses was in the first instance a distant object of historical inquiry for Freud, many of the terms in which he is evoked betray an imaginative identification of the inventor of psychoanalysis with the iconoclastic Egyptian prince he sees in Moses: "He must have been conscious of his great abilities, ambitious, and energetic; . . . he was a convinced adherent of the new religion, whose basic principles he fully understood and had made his own." The fate of his doctrine is compared at length to "the fate of any new scientific theory." Above all, Freud's entire analysis of the origins of biblical monotheism rests on an assumption about historical causation that also implicitly confirms his own lifelong enterprise—"how impossible it is to deny the personal influence of individual great men on the history of the world." This repeated stress on the determinative power of the great man, as Bluma Goldstein points out in *Wandering in a European Wilderness*, a study of the Moses figure in German Jewish writing (to be published later this year by Harvard), is one of the most troubling aspects of *Moses and Monotheism*, exhibiting an odd correspondence with the dominant German ideology of the day that Freud of course abhorred.

Let me hasten to add that none of the features I have just cited belongs, strictly speaking, to the

meanings of the text. I only want to suggest that the book Freud actually produced, which he himself described by turns as historical research and historical fiction, exhibits certain wobbles and swerves that derive not from the intrinsic nature of either of these projects but from the freight of feeling, the private agenda, that he brought to both.

All this does not diminish the force of Yerushalmi's central thesis, which is that *Moses and Monotheism*, whatever ostensible traits of hostility toward Jews and Judaism it may display, affirms the unique civilizing role of the Jews—precisely because they murdered their lawgiver—as vehicles of repression and consequently of guilt, sublimation, and culture-building moral consciousness. Though Yerushalmi clearly says in his preface that he does not intend to prove that psychoanalysis is a "Jewish science" (a common anti-Semitic accusation), his persuasive analysis points to the tentative conclusion that Freud in his heart of hearts thought it to be just that, for all the vehemence of his desire that others not think it so. If I may shift terms slightly, let me propose that psychoanalysis in Freud's last book proves to be not a Jewish science but, despite the intentness of Freud's scientific aspirations, a Jewish ideology.

IN THE course of Jewish history, the two centuries that begin around 1750 with Moses Mendelssohn and the embracing of the German Enlightenment by certain advanced Jewish intellectuals might be described as the Age of Ideologies. That age came to a sharp focus just around the turn of the 20th century. Both Zionism and Bundism held their founding congresses in 1897—just two years before Freud completed *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Judaism, or something that was no longer Judaism but rather Jewish collective existence, found itself—in a process that went on unevenly and by stages across the map of Europe—in disorienting new circumstances. For many Jews, the rabbinic system that had held things together for 1,500 years now lost its unquestioned authority. A European realm which in bits and pieces was redefining itself as a secular and civic rather than

a Christian entity implicitly required an answering redefinition on the part of Jews. New intellectual currents that were sweeping up some Jews undermined notions of revelation, the veracity of Scripture, the concordance between the natural world and divine will.

In Western Europe, substantial numbers of Jews responded to these changes by taking advantage of the new opportunities of assimilation—some through actual conversion, others simply by lapsing out of Jewish social and religious connections. Those who wanted to persist as Jews now often felt the need for an explicit program of Jewish continuation. Such programs were typically constructed by adapting to the Jewish predicament whatever seemed most appealing in current intellectual, political, or religious trends, canvassing the Jewish past for emphases that could underwrite and authenticate whatever the particular rationale for collective persistence. Roughly, this was the mechanism of ideologies like the Hebrew Enlightenment (*Haskalah*), Reform Judaism, German neo-Orthodoxy, Yiddishism, Bundism, and Zionism. What was involved in one way or another was a tendentious or creative misreading (the adjective depends on your point of view) of Jewish history from the Bible onward in order to make it serve the purposes of the present.

This is more or less what ideology always does with the past. J.H. Plumb's distinction in *The Death of the Past* aptly exposes a recurrent operation of the Jewish Age of Ideologies: "History, however, is not the past. The past is always a created ideology with a purpose, designed to control individuals, or motivate societies, or inspire classes." To which Plumb adds a rather grim observation that should not be suppressed even when we are dealing, as surely we are here, with the least sinister of ideologies: "Nothing has been so corruptly used as concepts of the past. The future of history and historians is to cleanse the story of mankind from those deceiving visions of a purposeful past."

ON FIRST reflection, it might seem that *Moses and Monotheism* is ded-

icated to just such a cleansing of the story of mankind from deceiving visions. After all, it reduces morality to a reflex of guilt, makes an act of murder the crystallizing moment of collective consciousness—the election—of the Jewish people. But since this very burden of guilt is the universal human legacy, the force of Freud's analysis is to represent the Jews, because of the particular way they confront the consequences of their guilt, as the supreme civilized people. It is precisely in this regard that Freud tries to have it both ways with the tension between universalism and particularism that had long troubled him. In his not altogether convincing reading, the Jews, because of their exemplary transformation of guilt into instinctual renunciation and sublimated activity, prove to be mankind writ large. *Moses and Monotheism* is thus peculiar among modern Jewish ideological manifestoes in simultaneously affirming and submerging a distinctive historical purpose for the Jewish people.

The new kind of God that the Egyptian Moses brought to the Hebrews signaled a decisive turn in the evolution of mankind, "a victory of spirituality over the senses," because this God was a rejection of the older, supposedly matriarchal order, and imposed a new, civilizing element of abstraction, "since maternity is proved by the senses whereas paternity is a surmise based on a deduction and a premise." A little later, Freud tries to explain how the Mosaic religion endowed the Jews with a peculiar character that enabled them to survive through three millennia. It gave them, he argues, an aloof sense of self-confidence, of having been "chosen"; it made it possible for them to share in the grandeur of a new conception of God; and, most crucially for Freud, "it forced upon the people a progress in spirituality which, significant enough in itself, further opened the way to respect for intellectual work and to further instinctual renunciations." "Spirituality" is a necessarily imperfect equivalent of the German *Geistigkeit*, which also implies intellectuality; the notion of a historical progress of *Geist* has a suspiciously Hegelian look.

Yerushalmi observes that Freud's idea of an acquired Jewish national character that becomes a timeless set of attributes is based on the curiously Lamarckian fallacy that social characteristics are transmitted genetically. I would add that this notion is symptomatic of the simplification of history into an ideological past that is undertaken in general in *Moses and Monotheism*. Such simplification is evident even in the central term of Freud's discussion, the Jewish people. Scholarship long ago recognized that Judaism and the Jews were a new phenomenon that emerged from the biblical framework sometime late in the Second Temple period. Hence scholars prefer "Israelite" or "Hebrew" as designations for the bearers of earlier biblical culture, as one can see in the titles of several of the historical studies Freud cites in his notes. But he himself repeatedly insists on characterizing the liberated slaves of the 13th century B.C.E.—he erroneously places them a century earlier—as "Jews," for his ideology of election and survival requires an unbroken continuum of "intellectual work" and "instinctual renunciations" from the Sinai wilderness to modern Vienna.

As in all substitutions of a past, in Plumb's sense, for history, the force of persuasion is rhetorical, and not evidential as it purports to be. In fact, Freud's notions of a fixed Jewish national character do not stand up to scrutiny any more than the idea of Reform theology that there is a Jewish "mission" to mankind, or the concept of Ahad Ha-am, the ideologue of so-called spiritual Zionism, that the Jews have defined themselves historically by their commitment to absolute justice. The people of Israel, both on its own soil and in its dispersal, has been a bewildering variety of different things in the course of 3,000 years. Freud, who these days is notorious as an advocate of patriarchy, celebrates the Jewish turning to a patriarchal God associated with abstract thought. But Gershom Scholem, in his pathbreaking *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, a book that appeared just two years after *Moses and Monotheism*, would reveal in the

Kabbalah a massive resurgence of feminine and mythological archetypes.

Freud's notion of instinctual renunciation has a similar air of plausibility, but it ignores the ecstatic, hedonistic, even sensualist currents both in biblical Israel and in later Jewish history, from the ancient bands of professional enthusiasts (*nevi'im*) and the erotic verse of the Song of Songs to the Hebrew literary culture of medieval Spain and Renaissance Italy and—at least in regard to the ecstatic—the hasidic movement of Eastern Europe. (Freud's own forebears were Hasidim, a fact he sought to erase in claiming he came from an "unbroken line of infidel Jews.") Most curious is Freud's idea of a timeless Jewish commitment to "intellectual work" and a process of abstraction that he identifies with a higher spirituality. Such a characterization works well enough for Maimonides and Spinoza and Sigmund Freud, but hardly for the prophet Ezekiel or Rabbi Akiba or even Judah Halevi, and it offers no explanation for the unabashedly

anthropomorphic imagination of God in the Bible. In fact, abstract, systematic thought is a legacy of the Greeks, not the Hebrews. It is Plato and Aristotle who develop the tools of abstraction Freud uses in his own intellectual enterprise, and not, as the urging of his ideology of Jewish continuity led him to imagine, Moses.

THE peculiarity of Freud's last work, which I have stressed, reflects how it is riven by the fierce tension of a fundamental paradox. The truth, it assumes, must be sought in origins. One hardly needs to say that this is the governing assumption of psychoanalysis both as explanatory theory and as therapy. It is also an idea that has entranced the European imagination ever since Romanticism: if the layered veils of history could be parted, if what lies behind what meets the eye could at last be made out, if the *Ursprung*, the ultimate origins, could be uncovered, we would understand the essential character of the thing itself, perhaps touch the secret of its power.

It is just such an uncovering of the *Ursprung* of the Jewish people and its monotheistic idea that Freud tries to carry out in *Moses and Monotheism*. The problem is that origins are always more or less inaccessible because collectively and individually we cover our tracks, leaving—whether through repression in Freud's sense or biased selection or the carelessness of neglect or scrambling through the sheer mechanics of transmission—only teasing traces, distorted fragments, of long forgotten beginnings. Freud himself is acutely aware of this difficulty in *Moses and Monotheism* and repeatedly confesses the need to conjecture from scanty evidence. He peers deep into the well of the past because he believes that only there will he find the truth he needs. But given his location in time, given the sustaining programmatic nature of the truth he wants to find, he is doomed to see in the well, however convinced he is of the validity of the image he rescues from the depths, no more than the shadowy reflection of his own face.

The Senator They Love to Hate

Charles Horner

FROM time to time, American political figures become convenient symbols of the evil against which all enlightened people are automatically ranged. In this rogue's gallery, the late Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin is still the greatest villain—his name has even entered into the language—but he is being challenged for pride of place in our own day by another U.S. Senator, Jesse Helms.

CHARLES HORNER is executive vice president of the Madison Center in Washington, D.C. From 1982 to 1990 he served in the State Department and the United States Information Agency.

A Republican from North Carolina, first elected in 1972 and in November 1990 reelected to a fourth term, Helms enjoys a long-standing popularity in his own state which is seldom if ever reflected in the accounts of him that appear in the press. There he is invariably seen as an ogre, a man with a "dark view of the world," "the Grand Old Man of the Far Right," or sometimes just "an angry old man." He is "irrational," an "extremist"; he appeals to the "darker side of the national character." Were Richard Hofstadter writing his canonical work on the "paranoid style in American pol-

itics" today, one suspects that Helms would rate at least a page, and perhaps even a chapter.

Although, as the example of McCarthy shows, it is not necessary to be a Southerner to qualify for the pantheon of evil, Helms has certainly been helped along by conforming so well, in his accent and general demeanor, to the stereotype of the powerful and inherently reactionary Southern Senator. Yet the Southern Senate barons of the past on whom the stereotype is based were quite a different breed. They were, first of all, Democrats and, through the workings of the seniority system, they controlled the main

committees and, thereby, the writing and passage of legislation. Such men had real institutional power. It was the kind of power that translated into construction projects and military contracts and economic development.

Jesse Helms today holds no such position. He is in the minority, a Republican, not exactly an endangered species in the Senate but not exactly a thriving one, either. There are now ten fewer Republicans in the Senate than there were only ten years ago and, even among those who remain, there has been a shift away from the New Right or "movement conservative" of the sort Helms is said to be.

In addition, however much of this sentiment remains among congressional Republicans, it must coexist with a Bush, not a Reagan, White House. The current President's relationship to the New Right may be seemingly deferential, but he is not its leader, nor can one presume that he feels particularly indebted to it for his own rise in the political world. A decade ago, in fact, he was among the objects of its suspicions and resentments. Thus, while the commentators of the Left like to see in Helms's tough Senate positions on various issues some sub-rosa and sinister connection to the White House, the lines of influence and communication, if they exist at all, must be circuitous indeed.

THE fact that Helms differs in these important respects from the archetypical Southern Senators of the past has not prevented him from being portrayed as today's principal heir to their racist attitudes. Yet the "racism" of which Helms is accused turns out on inspection to consist of nothing more than an opposition to quotas and other forms of racial preferences.

Helms may be somewhat disingenuous in defending himself against the charge of racism by invoking the traditional liberal opposition to racial preferences, but he does so very effectively. For example, he likes to cite the late Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, the great civil-rights advocate who swore that the congressional statutes of the 1960's should never, would never, could never lead to racial quotas and preferences. The

late William O. Douglas, the Supreme Court Justice most worshipped by liberals in his time, is another of those who insisted that the civil-rights laws neither would nor should lead to state-sponsored racial preferences; he is another of Helms's impeccable authorities. And, of course, there is a tradition among black advocates, reaching back to Frederick Douglass who, Helms is fond of reminding his colleagues, was opposed to what we now call affirmative action.

Be that as it may, the effort to link Helms to old-line Southern racism is of declining political value. On this particular issue, the national press has found a more interesting villain in David Duke. Moreover, the issue itself, volatile throughout the country, has been neutralized "inside the Beltway" by the Bush administration's endorsement of *de-facto* quotas in administrative practices,* and its claim that there is no difference between the civil-rights bill it has now accepted and the legislation insisted upon by the same groups which orchestrated the near-destruction of Justice Clarence Thomas.

IN TRUTH, however, race has never been the main concern of those most interested in demonizing Jesse Helms. The real energy in this effort has been provoked by his attentions to the management of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the containment of the AIDS epidemic.

Back in the 1960's, it occurred to the authors of the new civil-rights statutes that questions of interpretation might arise in the future, and thus they established a "legislative history." This history has been ignored, but at least it exists, and people in the 1990's (including Helms) can cite it, even if only plaintively. But when the National Endowment for the Arts was established in 1965, there was no one like Hubert Humphrey who spoke to any concern that, somehow, federal funds could or would go to pay for the depiction of homosexuals abusing one another, or to performances by naked women who cover themselves with chocolate or invite spectators to scrutinize their genitals, or to men who urinate on stage to comment on homelessness. Such things were probably not even

imaginable, and were certainly unutterable. But they have all now come to pass, and Jesse Helms has almost single-handedly taken it upon himself to do something about them.

Under Senate rules, Helms has been able to call up amendments to place restrictions on the NEA that would render it unable to fund obscenity. His case gets perfunctory praise from conservatives, mostly silence but sometimes ridicule from liberals, and total silence from moderates. When put to a roll call, the Helms amendments pass the Senate by votes of 70-30 or so. They are then attached to the Senate version of a particular piece of legislation under consideration, but disappear in the House-Senate conferences which produce the final versions of the bills.

Sometimes the contortions are farcical. A *New York Times* account of the congressional go-round in October deserves quotation at length:

Congressional negotiators rejected a measure to prohibit government financing of "patently offensive" sexual exhibits, even though more than two-thirds of the House and Senate had voted for it.

Twenty-seven negotiators from the two houses removed the provision, sponsored by Senator Jesse Helms, Republican of North Carolina, from an appropriations bill on Wednesday. . . .

The provision was stripped from the \$12.7 billion spending bill for the Interior Department and the National Endowment for the Arts as part of a deal with Western Senators to preserve low grazing fees on federal land in 16 states. . . .

Representative William E. Dannemeyer, Republican of California, . . . called the deal a "swap of corn for porn" and an example of the "imperial arrogance of liberals in Congress."

There is an undeniably comic aspect to this debate, and the small federal contribution to the trade in pornography already worth many billions may be significant only because it further legitimized a well-established business and introduced Senators to some of the

* See Chester E. Finn, Jr.'s "Quotas and the Bush Administration," COMMENTARY, November 1991.

terms which became famous in the Clarence Thomas hearings.

THE discussion of AIDS, however, is a different matter. Here the constitutional and the medical and the political get mixed up in various ways, but Helms, at least, is willing to make his premises explicit and open to examination and refutation. He says that in combating the AIDS epidemic, customary public-health measures are not applied to their fullest effect because of unprecedented political pressures. He maintains that AIDS is treated uniquely, altogether unlike even other sexually-transmitted or contagious diseases, because it has been bound up with the issue of homosexual rights, the issue which hovers over and informs the debate, without anyone quite saying so. In Helms's view, in short,

our efforts to treat AIDS as a public-health concern have been thwarted by a vocal, militant minority which has used the AIDS issue to promote a political agenda it has failed to achieve in its own right. Members of this militant movement, the homosexual lobby, have masterfully manipu-

lated the American public. By feeding America's compassion, they have turned the AIDS epidemic to their political advantage by using it to promote something they have never achieved before—homosexual rights.

Subjected to incessant abuse—and ridicule*—for such outspokenness, Helms has nevertheless introduced measures to expand the scope of required testing for AIDS, to keep AIDS-infected visitors from entering the country, to enlarge the federal role in regulating the nation's blood supply, and so on. But the fate of these proposals mirrors the fate of his proposals about the arts endowment—obligatory, sometimes overwhelming, support, followed by parliamentary maneuvering which vitiates their effects.

THESE initiatives have earned for Helms an enmity unique in the ongoing political debate. And it is obvious that the vilification is working. It partly explains why Helms has been left virtually alone in a battle that everyone who seeks a reversal in the drift toward domestic decadence would be expect-

ed to help him fight. Of course, "enlightened" people were late converts to other causes identified with the Right; one thinks of its foreign-policy crusades to "roll back" Communism in Eastern Europe, free the Baltics, recover Russia for civilization, and ostracize the regime in Beijing. But for all that the Reagan revolution managed to do all these things, our cultural and moral order here at home is scarcely Reaganesque. Indeed, the decade which began with fretful breastbeating that Khomeinism was coming to America in the guise of Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority ended with Robert Mapplethorpe's becoming the most famous "artist" in the land—and Jesse Helms his only consequential political nemesis. No wonder that he has been demonized by the liberal culture.

* For example, a group of people calling themselves the Treatment Action Guerrillas spent \$3,500 to secure a giant replica of a condom which they then managed to place on the chimney atop the roof of Helms's Arlington, Virginia, home. They inflated the contraption and attached a placard to it explaining that the device was meant to prevent the spread of "unsafe politics."

How to Be Politically Correct

Daniel Seligman

IN *The Sunshine Boys*, which is about two retired comedians loosely modeled on Smith and Dale, Neil Simon has one of them explaining that some things are funny and always get a laugh, while other things are invincibly unfunny. For example, Cleveland is funny but Maryland is not. Cupcakes are funny. Pickles are funny. Roast beef is not funny. Great comedians know this instinctively.

Applying this model to current

controversies over what is and isn't politically correct, anyone who wishes to gain a teaching fellowship at Dartmouth or even to circulate with honor in the beau monde needs to know at least the following:

Wolves are politically correct.

Urinating onstage with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts is politically correct.

The SAT's are not politically correct. IQ tests are not politically correct. It is politically correct to say that IQ tests measure nothing except your ability to pass an IQ test.

The Mercedes is politically incorrect.

Bats are politically correct. Here I refer not to baseball implements but to Count Dracula's furry little friends. For those not up to speed on bats, their quintessential correctness was resoundingly certified recently in the *New York Times*, which laid it down in the "Science" section that bats are great but "are succumbing worldwide . . . to human ignorance, greed, and destruction."

Aztecs are politically correct, although less so than Seminoles or the Sioux.

DANIEL SELIGMAN, a long-time *Fortune* editor, writes the "Keeping Up" column for that magazine.

Speaking of the Seminoles, it is now politically incorrect to identify a great work as "seminal."

It is increasingly rated incorrect to designate Notre Dame the "fighting Irish." The problem here is not the observable ethnicity of the average Notre Dame running back but national-origin stereotyping and also, in some circles, trivialization of the IRA's great work.

Encouraging little boys to play with dolls is politically correct.

Penumbrae and emanations in the U.S. Constitution are politically correct.

Cutting down trees is politically incorrect, as hinted in the Eddie Bauer catalogue entry offering pitch-saturated kindling wood "felled by lightning or other natural causes."

Die-ins are politically correct.

Norman Lear is politically correct, even though he drives a Mercedes.

Homeless people are politically correct.

The word "bums" is politically incorrect.

National Public Radio is politically correct.

The tomahawk chop is not politically correct, not even when Jane Fonda does it. The tomahawk chop is deemed demeaning to Native Americans, for reasons recently elaborated by politically-correct New York *Times* sports columnist Robert Lipsyte, who asked how you would like it if there was a baseball team named after Jews, and every time the home team had something going, why, 50,000 fans would stand up and yell in unison, "What a deal!" (The view in our house was that Lipsyte has developed not only a politically-correct argument but a salable movie script.)

Female cops are politically correct, although arguably less so than female sportswriters in NFL locker rooms.

Women in the armed forces are politically correct, especially the 10 percent or so who are pregnant at any point in time.

Diversity in higher education is politically correct, with the single exception of the young lady at Harvard who gave fits to its then-president Derek Bok by hanging a Confederate flag outside her window.

("They want diversity," she said. "I'll show them diversity.")

Sex education is politically correct.

Girls in high school who want to try out for linebacker on the football team are politically correct.

The earth is politically correct.

The Virginia Military Institute is politically incorrect.

The Morristown, New Jersey, public library is also politically incorrect because it has tried to prevent homeless people from living there and has argued in court that they smell bad, which counts as insensitive.

People who repeatedly use the term "insensitive" are politically correct.

People who talk a lot about self-esteem are politically correct.

Witches are politically correct. Getting inside the whole argument about witches takes a while unless one has already read the passage from the Anti-Bias Curriculum where they tell the teacher how to overcome little kids' prejudices against witches, and even then a fellow could feel he is still missing the point, which seems to have something to do with empowering women. The day of Halloween, the New York *Times* ran a sympathetic and politically-correct interview with a leading witch, Margot Adler, who in her "mundane life" is a cultural and political correspondent for National Public Radio.

As is well known, dead white males are politically incorrect and live white males are increasingly under suspicion.

There is a country-and-Western song with lyrics—"When I Say No, I Mean Maybe, or Maybe I Mean Yes"—that are so hopelessly and benightedly politically incorrect that the record has been repudiated by the lady who sings it, sounding somewhat like a defendant at the Moscow trials. The song was denounced again recently in a *MacNeil/Lehrer* commentary on acquaintance rape.

Condoms are politically correct. Some experts believe condoms are the most politically-correct thing there is in the whole world—certainly in the average drugstore.

Genes are politically incorrect.

Fur coats are politically incorrect.

Men who cry are politically correct. That is why we now have a men's movement whose main discernible activity is crying.

The 1960's were politically correct, the 1970's less so, while the 1980's are the most incorrect decade in all of human history, narrowly edging out the 1490's.

New York *Times* editorials are always politically correct. If asked to name the single most politically-correct editorial ever run in this great paper, or even if not asked, and maybe even if menaced with firearms by folks opposed to this citation, I would unhesitatingly select the lead editorial of July 20, 1991, which started off by saying that if you were going to have invasive surgery performed, and you had to choose between two equally qualified doctors, and one of them had AIDS, it would be emotional and irrational of you not to pick the one with AIDS because the chances of his infecting you are minimal.

Ms. magazine is always politically correct, as evidenced most recently in its rule that articles about lesbians have to be written by lesbians.

The phrase "people of color" is politically correct.

The Amazon is politically correct. Ditto the rain forest. Ditto wetlands everywhere.

Use of the term "swamp" is politically incorrect.

Lie detectors were politically incorrect until Anita Hill came along.

Nelson Mandela is politically correct, even when he praises Castro, or is it especially when he praises Castro?

People who conduct candlelight vigils are politically correct, unless they are pro-lifers.

Communism is more or less dead, but anti-anti Communism remains politically correct. This means that anti-anti-anti-anti-Communism is also politically correct. The basic rule here is that if you just divide the number of prefixes by two and end up with an integer, you can be sure of having a politically-correct position.

Roast beef is not politically correct.

Inventing the Facts

THE SAMSON OPTION: ISRAEL'S NUCLEAR ARSENAL AND AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY. By SEYMOUR M. HERSH. *Random House*. 354 pp. \$23.00.

Reviewed by STEVEN EMERSON

SEYMOUR HERSH has long been recognized as one of America's top investigative journalists. He is the recipient, as the jacket of this book tells us, of "more than a dozen major journalism prizes," including the Pulitzer Prize, and was responsible for breaking the story of the My Lai massacre. He has earned a reputation, at least among his colleagues in the news industry, for reporting courageously and accurately things that other reporters have been unable or unwilling to report.

Besides translating into big book advances and adulation of his work, the most important by-product of this reputation is that the media tend to accept Hersh's findings without the same skepticism or competitive jealousy with which many reporters traditionally view the work of their colleagues. In other words, Hersh's reputation has given him a license to publish virtually anything he wants without the same scrutiny that applies to other members of the media.

No book in recent years better demonstrates the dangers of having such a reputation than Hersh's *The Samson Option*. It purports to offer the inside story of Israel's nuclear arsenal and the activities of its intelligence service, the Mossad. Yet virtually none of the book's newsworthy findings is accurate. In fact, many of Hersh's claims are demonstrably false. Had this book been written by any other journalist, it would have never seen the light of day. As it is, simple fact-checking and verification of sources

should have stopped its publication.

At the outset, it should be said that Israel's nuclear program is a perfectly legitimate area for journalistic scrutiny. That Israel managed clandestinely to acquire a nuclear option by the early 1970's with American connivance or acquiescence is a story as compelling as any other covert program meriting investigative focus. The problem with *The Samson Option*, however, is that Hersh approached Israel's nuclear program and Israeli policies in general with a severe ideological bias that rendered him, at best, susceptible to disinformation and, at worst, receptive to anything negative about Israel regardless of its veracity.

Hersh is obsessively antagonistic to all of Israel's policies—not just its nuclear program but its entire political posture—and he makes disparaging, and factually incorrect, statements about Israel's role in the 1967 war, its war against Palestinian terrorists, its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, and its intelligence-gathering. Throughout the book Hersh repeats old canards—for example, that black African countries cut off ties to Israel as a result of their opposition to Israel's retention of territories after the Yom Kippur War of 1973 when even African leaders openly admit that their termination of relations with Israel was due to the extraordinary power of the new OPEC oil cartel.

On the primary question of Israel's development of a nuclear capability, Hersh is not only opposed but is angry that the U.S. turned a blind eye to it. He seems to believe that the "Samson Option"—the acquisition by Israel of a nuclear mutual-assured-destruction capability—was only a manifestation of innate Israeli aggression, megalomania, and belligerence when in truth it was driven by Israeli military insecurity and fears of Arab quantitative superiority.

To PUT this book together, Hersh cannibalized the available literature on the subject, then stitched in

his own interviews with anonymous sources, most of whom, it is transparently clear, had no substantive connection to Israel's nuclear program or to U.S. oversight of it. One of the sources who agreed to be quoted on the record was an Israeli named Ari Ben-Menashe. Ben-Menashe has become ubiquitous: in addition to being behind the major allegations in Hersh's book, he is also the primary source in Gary Sick's *October Surprise*, which alleges that the Reagan-Bush campaign in 1980 secretly negotiated a deal with Iran to delay the release of American hostages until after the election.

It was from Ben-Menashe that Hersh picked up some of his most sensational charges: that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir personally transferred purloined American intelligence and satellite data to the Soviets; that the late media mogul Robert Maxwell worked with the Mossad and helped it capture Mordechai Vanunu, who had smuggled nuclear data out of Israel; and that Jonathan Pollard had actually been spying for Israel for much longer than was previously thought.

In establishing Ben-Menashe as a bona-fide source, Hersh writes that he "served for more than ten years in the External Relations Department of the Israeli Defense Force, one of the most sensitive offices in Israel's intelligence community." Hersh also writes that in 1987 Ben-Menashe went to "work directly for Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir as an adviser on intelligence issues." This description is correct in one detail—Ben-Menashe did serve in the External Relations Department from 1977 through 1987. Everything else is palpably and demonstrably false. Ben-Menashe was a low-level translator, translating letters to and from foreign military attachés, mostly about mundane matters. He never worked for Shamir.

Had Hersh interviewed anyone in Israel—he never went to Israel, later claiming disingenuously that he would have been subject to Is-

STEVEN EMERSON, a new contributor, is an investigative journalist specializing in national-security affairs. His most recent book is *Terrorist* (Random House).

raeli censorship—or, for that matter, had he independently investigated any of the outlandish claims by Ben-Menashe, he would have found that his source was an abject fraud and impostor. Indeed, Ben-Menashe was denied a special security clearance because he was considered delusional. Thus he claimed that he was Israel's top spy, that he had been a commander of the Entebbe raid in 1976, that he had planted the homing device in the Iraqi nuclear reactor right before the Israeli raid in 1981, that he had worked with Shamir on top-secret projects around the world, and that he had been with George Bush in Paris in October 1980 when Bush supposedly negotiated a secret deal with Iran.

But Hersh need not even have traveled to Israel to discover that Ben-Menashe was a pathological liar. When his book was still in manuscript, Hersh was warned by several journalists about Ben-Menashe's credibility problems. The most forceful of these warnings came from the chief investigative reporter for the London *Sunday Times* "Insight" team, Peter Hounam. As the man who broke the first story on Israel's nuclear reactor, based on the photos and information supplied by Vanunu, Hounam was particularly well-qualified to evaluate the authenticity of Ben-Menashe and his description of what is now referred to as the "Vanunu Affair." But after interviewing Ben-Menashe, Hounam quickly concluded that he was an outright fabricator. In an effort to convince Hersh that he would be committing an egregious error to rely on Ben-Menashe, Hounam offered him an opportunity to go through his own personal files on the Vanunu Affair—a gesture not normally made in the world of investigative journalism. But Hersh turned down the offer, and made no changes in the manuscript.

New evidence revealing the methods used by Hersh was disclosed in the wake of Robert Maxwell's death, which occurred just days after Hersh's book was published in late October 1991. On November 12, Hersh issued a statement in London that he had just acquired new "documentation"—consisting

of logs of telephone calls from a Geneva hotel to Israel—to support his allegations against Maxwell. According to Hersh, a "private detective" who had been hired by the Mossad had provided him with the material. Yet shortly after Hersh issued this statement, the London *Sunday Times* revealed that the "private detective" was none other than an infamous British hoaxer who specializes in deceiving British newspapers. The hoaxer admitted to the *Times* that he had "conned" Hersh's publisher into believing that he worked with the Mossad, and had been paid for this story. The *Times* also established conclusively that no telephone logs from the Geneva hotel existed at all, rendering Hersh's statement that he had acquired such "documentation" patently false.

EVEN beyond the charges raised by Ben-Menashe, Hersh presents as fact things that are highly implausible. For example, he alleges that Israel targeted the Soviet Union for nuclear oblivion, which is nothing short of ludicrous. Even William Quandt, who served as a Middle East aide in the National Security Council under Jimmy Carter, writes: "I find it difficult to believe that Israel has developed a so-called 'counterforce' capability against the Soviets. It makes little sense militarily, in contrast to a 'city-busting' capability, which might make the Soviets think twice if they were considering threats to Israel."

Equally absurd is Hersh's statement (given without attribution) that an American KH-11 satellite "captured an Israeli nuclear-missile storage site" and that American government experts were able to "count ten items that were subsequently confirmed as nuclear warheads." This means either that Israel deliberately left in the open ten nuclear warheads so that American and Soviet satellites could photograph them, or that the KH-11 satellite is so powerful that it can see through the roofs of buildings. The former notion is totally implausible and the latter is physically impossible.

To repeat, the Israeli nuclear-weapons program is fair game for investigative journalism. And there

is no doubt that Israel's intelligence services, and the government itself, like all other intelligence services and governments around the world, have engaged in skullduggery in the conduct of covert operations. Israel may in fact prove more journalistically interesting from this point of view than other countries because it probably relies to a greater degree on covert diplomacy and operations. But none of this translates into a license for well-known authors to publish outright inventions like *The Samson Option*.

Indecent Exposure

THE JOURNALS OF JOHN CHEEVER.
Edited by ROBERT GOTTLIEB.
Knopf. 399 pp. \$25.00.

Reviewed by MORRIS FREEDMAN

A SEASONED admirer of the fiction of John Cheever is likely to go through these journals, which he kept from about the late 40's until his death in 1982, in a kind of feverish disturbance, as memorable scenes and characters from the novels and short stories come alive but with a different coloration, with thicker strokes, and with haunting, sometimes astonishing biographical details.

In the dry, isolated passages of these journals, the Breughel-like men, women, children, and pets of Cheever's autumnal upstate New York and Connecticut landscapes become grotesque, bleak, Hieronymus Bosch gargoyles. Thus, the tipsy, aggrieved wife out of a Woody Allen black comedy, who, after a morning tiff with her husband, is busy putting price tags on the furniture when he brings a client home for dinner, emerges, crudely and almost cruelly, as a member of the Cheever household. So does the hateful, punitive lout who marks a line through the days of the calendar in which he will not speak to his wife. The philistine brother who grievously offends the narrator has lineaments of Cheever himself.

MORRIS FREEDMAN has taught literature at the University of Maryland and written widely on American culture.

DAVID H. HIRSCH
**The Deconstruction
 of Literature**
 Criticism after Auschwitz
 Brown University Press
 \$18.95 paper / \$45.00 cloth

ALBERT CAMUS
Between Hell and Reason
 Essays from the Resistance
 Newspaper Combat, 1944-1947
 Alexandre de Gramont, editor
 Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, foreword
 Wesleyan University Press
 \$14.95 paper / \$35.00 cloth

LAWRENCE H. FUCHS
The American Kaleidoscope
 Race, Ethnicity, and the Civic Culture
 Wesleyan University Press
 \$24.95 paper / \$45.00 cloth

JEHUDA REINHARZ
 and WALTER SCHATZBERG, editors
**The Jewish Response
 to German Culture**
 From the Enlightenment
 to the Second World War
 Clark University Press
 \$19.95 paper / \$40.00 cloth

ARNALDO MOMIGLIANO
**On Pagans, Jews,
 and Christians**
 Wesleyan University Press
 \$17.95 paper

GEORGE K. ANDERSON
**The Legend
 of the Wandering Jew**
 Brown University Press
 \$24.95 paper



Brandeis Series in American Jewish History, Culture, and Life

JONATHAN D. SARNA, editor

Brandeis University Press has established this series to publish books that break new ground in the study of American Jewish history, culture, and life. It encompasses all areas of American Jewish civilization, including history, religion, thought, politics, economics, sociology, anthropology, literature, and the arts. The series will emphasize contemporary and interdisciplinary studies, and volumes that tie together divergent aspects of the American Jewish experience. The first two books will be published this spring.

SYLVIA BARAK FISHMAN, editor
Follow My Footprints
 Changing Images of Women in
 American Jewish Fiction — A Reader
 An anthology of selections from the writings of Sholem Aleichem, Sholem Asch, Abraham Cahan, Seymour Epstein, Gloria Goldreich, Rebecca Goldstein, Vivian Gornick, Chaim Grade, Gloria Kirshheimer, Bernard Malamud, Tillie Olsen, Cynthia Ozick, Grace Paley, I. L. Peretz, Anne Roiphe, Henry Roth, Philip Roth, Ruth Setton, I. B. Singer, Herman Wouk, and Anzia Yezierska that document the diverse representations and roles of Jewish women in American literature and culture.
 \$24.95 paper / \$45.00 cloth

LEON A. JICK, editor
**The Americanization
 of the Synagogue, 1820-1870**
 A classic account of the growth and development of Reform Judaism in 19th-century America is now in paperback for the first time, with a new foreword.
 \$18.00 paper

Other Brandeis University Press Books

MICHAEL R. MARRUS
Samuel Bronfman
 The Life and Times
 of Seagram's Mr. Sam

As the creator of the Seagram whiskey empire Sam Bronfman became a mythic figure in the business world, and in the years after his death the legend has developed further and further away from the life. Now for the first time the complete story of the irascible son of a Jewish pioneer from Czarist Russia whose business acumen built an international company renowned for the quality of its products is available.
 \$35.00

ABRAM L. SACHAR, editor
Brandeis
 A Host at Last — Revised Edition

A new edition of the story of the founding of Brandeis University, the first privately funded, Jewish-sponsored, non-sectarian liberal arts university in the United States.
 \$24.95 paper / \$60.00 cloth

*New from the Tauber Institute
 for the Study of European Jewry*

ALEXANDER ALTMANN
**The Meaning
 of Jewish Existence**
 Theological Essays, 1930-1939
 Alfred L. Ivry, editor
 Paul Mendes-Flohr, introduction

A leading thinker's early essays on theological and intellectual foundations of Jewish existence and values written in 1930s Germany now available in English.
 \$45.00

YISRAEL GUTMAN, EZRA MENDELSON, JEHUDA REINHARZ, and CHONE SHMERUK, editors
**The Jews of Poland
 Between Two World Wars**

In 27 essays distinguished scholars explore Jewish politics, religion, literature, and society in Poland from 1918 to 1939.
 \$24.95 paper / \$60.00 cloth

New England

University Press of New England • Hanover, New Hampshire 03755-2159 • 800-421-1561

In Cheever's fiction, gracelessness, coarseness, indecency, insensitivity, unkindness, lapses from rectitude are equated with aspects of evil, failures to abide by compelling ethical and aesthetic correctness, to do or to be good. Story after story and, in the *Wapshot* novels, passage after passage urgently and emphatically reject self-indulgence, crassness, heartlessness, masochistic charity. In one short story, a boozing Madison Avenue executive pulls himself together after his divorce and the loss of his job to escape the attentions of a nurturing, self-sacrificing woman habitually dressed in black, an "angel of death" who collects losers just before they go completely under. In another, a distraught wife, whose "enormous" radio picks up the private quarrels of neighbors in her Manhattan apartment house, turns out herself to be living in the sort of maudlin entanglements on which she has been compulsively eavesdropping. The husband who lashes his wife with silence is literally forced to his knees, to grovel, by a lowly secretary he has mistreated. Now, from sketches, hints, repetitions, and shards in the journals, we can gather how Cheever's fiction gave body to periods of acute guilt and consequent punishment, or the need for punishment, in his personal life.

Yet in his fiction Cheever rises above the limits of the ordinary, while his journals are weighed down with the dutiful solemnity that is part of the diarist's commitment to be honest and specific. We find in these day-by-day jottings little of the wild, nearly surrealistic comedy that leaps out happily and unexpectedly to brighten the shaped, imagined prose. Nor do the entries always reveal an artist's awareness of the authority of compression. A single short story may be enough to allow a reader to experience the range of Cheever's wit and moral complexity; we have to read long patches of the journals to get the same effect.

STILL, the journals do lay out the appealing record of a man gnawed by a guilt that makes him kin to sinners he keeps discovering all around him, like the naïf in Haw-

thorne's biting story, "Young Goodman Brown." The book's editor, Robert Gottlieb, has skillfully turned the shreds and morsels of rumination and memory into a sustained essayistic, elegiac discourse. And a curious thread of continuity connects Cheever's virtual chanting of guilt and apology with the self-conscious declarations by his son Benjamin, who introduces the text, and by Gottlieb, who provides a concluding note. Both assure and reassure us that Cheever himself and his wife, two sons, and daughter wanted these journals, with all their discomfiting particulars, to be published.

The intensity of these protestations generates a lingering discomfort. Benjamin Cheever, loyally but I think inadequately, accounts for the publication of the journals as follows:

The remorse he felt about his bisexuality had been almost unendurable when he was a young man. By 1980, he could write: "In the 30's and 40's men seemed to fear homosexuality as the early mariners feared sailing off the end of the ocean in a world supported on a turtle's back."

A simpleton might think that bisexuality was the essence of his problem, but of course it was not. Nor was alcoholism. He came to terms with his bisexuality. He quit drinking. But life was still a problem. The way he dealt with that problem was to articulate it. He made it into a story, and then he published the story. When he discovered that he had written the story of his life, he wanted that published too.

Putting aside this overly simple explanation, let us concede that Cheever's revealing the journals to Benjamin before he died, and his expecting them to be published afterward, satisfied some special need, perhaps related to supporting his delicate sense of having established himself as a literary figure. Let us also concede that satisfying that need was, for the family and Gottlieb, justification enough to publish. The question still arises, how much of a social need, or how much of a scholarly need, the disclosure of such extensive soliloquy genuinely satisfies. It was originally uttered secretly and was pre-

served (not always legibly) in supposedly inviolable privacy, protected from unveiling as any nightmare or fantasy normally is, and for purposes having nothing to do with literature. Its publication will inevitably and gratuitously be distressing to persons callously or ungenerously referred to, and possibly and pointlessly corrosive of Cheever's total reputation.

THE widespread furor over the publication of H.L. Mencken's diaries a few years ago focuses the general issue sharply. Mencken's published writings were the work of a shrewd, enlightened, brilliant observer of politics, literature, social habits. As a public man Mencken had befriended and worked closely with a wide range of persons. What then are we to make of the ugly, petty entries we discover after his death about blacks, Jews, and close associates? The most we can say is that the diaries reveal a troublesome but not all that astounding mix of generous outward conduct with concealed, whimsical, possibly pathological, consciously suppressed swinishness; of gracious and graceful public expression with vomituous spurts, of value only to clinicians.

Much of the private writing that publishers and scholars have gone to inordinate lengths to uncover in recent years has done surprisingly little to enlighten, in proportion to the damage risked. James and Nora Joyce's "dirty letters," as they have come to be called, if ever published, may marginally illuminate Joyce's method in *Ulysses* of using his wife as a source for Molly Bloom's sexual sensations. But is it worth violating the Joyces' and their survivors' privacy for any such minute addition to an already solidly made and accepted observation? For all the high-minded academic emphasis on the importance of the message over the messenger, on the song over the singer, literary study keeps descending to profitless, sensational biographical exposure.

Like medieval peasants, we have become awed by supposedly holy fragments of bones and rags, relics, intimate revelations. Or is it that we derive from them the satisfac-

tion of the leveler? We now have a library of books and articles, some admittedly speculative, some actually plausible, some irresponsible and disreputable, some just distasteful or ill-advised, all in some measure demeaning of respectable, rigorous literary discussion—on Shakespeare's, Kipling's, and Hemingway's putative homosexuality; Milton's sexual naïveté; Lewis Carroll's and James Barrie's pedophilia; Henry James's impotence; Shelley's domestic messiness; Byron's incest and bisexuality; Emily Dickinson's abortion; G.B. Shaw's and Max Beerbohm's failures to consummate their marriages; Willa Cather's lesbianism; Virginia Woolf's rape; T.S. Eliot's callousness toward his first wife. It is not a matter of putting into a portrait the warts and other blemishes which properly provide particularity, shading, and depth; it is a matter of painting a new portrait that distracts, blurs, titillates, and that can help us little or not at all in understanding a writer's words.

I sense a worthy admonitory ambivalence on the part of those responsible for publishing Cheever's journals. As it happens, the journals are not completely irrelevant, they do not really distort, and the tensions they engender are of the essence of Cheever's rueful irony. Still, even after the intelligent editing, they offer raw and inessential matter that most artists in the end commonly bring themselves to expunge or repress, and they contain little that challenges us to reassess the body of Cheever's created work.

Creativity, Inc.

THE BEST AMERICAN POETRY 1990.
Edited by JORIE GRAHAM. Collier Books. 283 pp. \$9.95.

THE BEST AMERICAN POETRY 1991.
Edited by MARK STRAND. Collier Books. 326 pp. \$12.95.

Reviewed by D.G. MYERS

EVER since Joseph Epstein, writing in COMMENTARY, pointed out the obvious—namely, that contemporary poetry is not precious to

very many readers in America, and for good reason—the poets have been raising a stink.* According to a May 1991 essay in the *Atlantic* by Dana Gioia, over thirty rebuttals to Epstein have been published so far, and more, probably, are to come. It is not safe to outrage any group in America—especially not contemporary poets, who are used to writing away like mad, without giving a lot of thought to it.

In an effort to demonstrate the good health of contemporary poetry, Collier Books (a division of Macmillan) has taken to issuing an annual prize volume—the best American poems published during the previous year, as selected by a poet of esteem. David Lehman, the general editor of the series (which numbers four volumes so far), says the books' reception—good reviews, a place in 1989 on the independent booksellers' best-seller list—has gone far to prove that "[p]oetry in the United States today does have a vital readership; ru-

mors regarding the death of the reader have been greatly exaggerated."

It might be asked, though, whether *The Best American Poetry* does not prove just the opposite. The books seem intended not so much to be read as greeted with tribute and approval. The selections are arranged in alphabetical order by author's name, as if in a catalogue or directory. They are followed by nearly 50 pages of biographical and explanatory notes. These go into full detail about the contributors' births, degrees, publications, awards, honors, grants, and fellowships, places of residence, and academic appointments (permanent and visiting). And then the poets come forward to explicate the mysteries of their own poems, often at tedious length. The notes alone are enough to put to rest any curiosity about poets or poetry.

Meanwhile, the opening pages of

* "Who Killed Poetry?," August 1988.

The surprise hit of the season ...

POSTCARDS FROM PINSK

By the author of "The Marriage Hearse" and "Carnovsky's Retreat."



**A novel by
LARRY DUBERSTEIN**

**The critics love this book
about one man's midlife crisis
and spiritual odyssey.**

◆

*"Duberstein has an eye and ear for
the truly comic and packs bitter-
sweet humor and unfailing insight."*
N.Y. Times

◆

*"A witty way with words. A sophis-
ticated view of a mid-life crisis."*
L.A. Times

◆

*"A great deal of the pleasure in this
novel lies in its language."*
Booklist

◆

*"Ironic depiction of a man-comic,
sad and entirely believable."*
Publishers Weekly

◆

*"An affectionate portrait of a lost
soul who doesn't know it until he
finds out for himself."*
Kirkus Reviews

Published by The Permanent Press
Available at your favorite bookstore **\$21⁹⁵**

D.G. MYERS teaches English at Texas A&M University.

each volume are given over to prose introductions, by Lehman and the year's editor, which are composed in the tone of a begging letter, like the encomiastic dedications that were once attached to literary works to angle for the favor of a patron. Prize volumes are themselves a modern variety of literary patronage. And what *The Best American Poetry* really proves is that poetry in the United States today is the ward and client of a vital system of patronage.

The new patronage of poetry assumes institutional shape in the so-called writers' workshops. Of the 134 poets chosen over the past two years to appear in *The Best American Poetry*, all but 20 or so—85 percent—earn a living by teaching creative writing. A number of critics such as Epstein, Gioia, Karl Shapiro, the late Jean Stafford, Donald Justice, Donald Hall, Greg Kuzma, and Bruce Bawer have attacked this system. Under its influence, they say, contemporary poetry is produced not out of inner necessity, but in response to institutional pressures. "Like their colleagues in other academic departments," Gioia observes, "poetry professionals must publish, for purposes of job security and career advancement." Contemporary poems are not written to be read, but to be listed on a *curriculum vitae*.

All this is true, but there is more to the story. Ideas are more corrupting than institutions, and contemporary poets are the dupes less of bad social or professional arrangements than of a bad conception of poetry. Creative writing does seem to be at the bottom of things, but only because it is itself founded upon the same basic doctrine which underlies and gives impetus to the writing of much contemporary poetry—the doctrine of creativity.

Creativity is both an educational and a poetic doctrine. In education it operates as the belief that children develop themselves most fully by being released from adult standards and adult expectations to pursue activities of their own choosing, in which they discover for themselves what they might do. In poetry, this "creative" activity is prolonged far beyond childhood

and the days of apprenticeship—even mature poets seek to realize themselves as poets (to "find their voice") in the act of writing a poem.

TO BE SURE, creative freedom is a necessary condition for good poetry; but it is not a sufficient condition. It cannot substitute for faithfulness to experience or responsibility to an audience, as embodied in a tradition of art. Nor does it supply any real reason for writing. Lacking such a reason, the poet is confined to a solipsistic putting forth of self, and poetry is reduced to gesture. The effects are on display in *The Best American Poetry*.

When it goes bad, contemporary poetry is either pseudo-creative, or sub-creative. Pseudo-creativity shows up as weird typographical layouts, departures from the norm in punctuation and syntax, repeated enjambment to disrupt the natural order of words, random tallies of minute details, narrative structure with no story to tell, cuckoo nests of literary apparatus in which poets invade the traditions of poetry to take over such things as the names of ancient genres, epigrammatic mottoes, dedications in *memoriam*, set stanzaic patterns, Roman-numeraled subsections—and then neglect to put them to any use. Many contemporary poems have the mere appearance of poetry. On the page they are printed in lines that veer away from the right-hand margin, but on a closer reading they turn out to be not the real thing but merely parasitic on poetry's outward form.

If the pseudo-creative poet mistakes incoherence for true creativity, the sub-creative poet goes to a different extreme, elaborately working out a negligible theme. The most interesting of today's poets have recognized the need to restore a sense of factual basis and dramatic necessity to the writing of poetry, and many of their poems are efforts, admirable in themselves, to refurbish the principle of meaning which fell into disrepute in modern literature. But the meanings these poets come up with tend to be trivial, and, worse, to go on being trivial at length.

Thus, in *The Best American Po-*

etry, Alfred Corn imagines what Frances Trollope (author of *Domestic Manners of the Americans*) would have said in conversation about 19th-century life in Cincinnati, after her return to England; Robert Pinsky reconstructs ancient Jewish worship in a wilderness setting like Yosemite national park; Laurence Lieberman recreates Sir James Rodney's invasion of St. Eustasius in 1781; Michael Ryan recalls how his father used to transfix him with tales about playing the violin in East St. Louis dance halls in the 20's; David R. Slavitt retells the myth of Telephus; Melissa Green describes Boethius's death in prison. All these poets mean to be both careful and definitive in statement, but under the spell of the creative doctrine they lapse into garrulousness, writing in a style that (in Hazlitt's phrase) "occupies more space than it is worth."

THERE are exceptions, some included in these volumes. Poets of an older generation, who were not trained in writers' workshops, or poets who were educated in other countries—Amy Clampitt, Donald Davie, Richard Wilbur, Ruth Stone, Reed Whittemore, Anthony Hecht, Thom Gunn, John Hollander, Seamus Heaney, Joseph Brodsky—stand aside from the new creative dispensation. And at least two younger American poets write with more than occasional brilliance. They are Rosanna Warren and Elizabeth Spires, both of whom are represented in *The Best American Poetry 1990*, Warren by a moving elegy to her aunt, and Spires by a taut philosophical meditation upon a shipwreck off Land's End. Among younger poets not published in either of the last two years' volumes one might also mention Timothy Steele, David Middleton, Eric Trethewey, R.L. Barth, and George Bilgere, who deserve more attention than they have received from their peers.

For most of the remainder, however, there is only the solipsism of creativity. Whether contemporary poets will grow tired of this stance and find something better to do in the next century (even if the better activity is not poetry) is something nobody can predict. Until they do,

though, they should not be surprised when readers turn away from them, pitying the small value and less charm of even *The Best American Poetry*.

Engendering Judaism

DEBORAH, GOLDA, AND ME. By LETTY COTTIN POGREBIN. Crown. 377 pp. \$22.00.

Reviewed by MIDGE DECTER

JEWISH women, observes Letty Cottin Pogrebin in her new book, *Deborah, Golda, and Me*, "often are asked to choose between two movements that represent both aspects of my double identity—Judaism and feminism. Pressured to declare a priority, I feel like a child who is given the impossible task of selecting a preferred parent, or like a prisoner allowed food and water but not both." This book, then, part autobiography and part tract, is an account of Mrs. Pogrebin's struggle to bring the two sides of her identity together. As its title suggests, she claims at last to have come to a rich synthesis, wholly Jewish and wholly feminist, and has moved to a higher doubleness, the biblical Deborah being the model for her spiritual ambitions and Israel's Golda Meir, for her political.

Letty Cottin, as she then was, grew up in a religiously observant home in Queens, a bright and ambitious girl, classically striving for the attention and approval of a father who was both a learned Jew and a passionate Zionist. She was educated until the age of fifteen in a Jewish day school. That she should nevertheless be capable of referring to Judaism as a "movement" is a reminder of how deep and abiding an influence on its adherents is the founding dictum of the women's movement that "the personal is political."

Young Letty turned away from the faith at the age of fifteen, when

MIDGE DECTER, whose books include *The Liberated Woman & Other Americans* and *The New Chastity*, is Distinguished Fellow of the Institute on Religion and Public Life in New York City.

Winter

THE NATIONAL INTEREST

— TRADING IN FUTURES —

Welcome to the Age of Proliferation

Tom Clancy & Russell Seitz

Living With the Red Army

Fred Iklé

The Breaking of Nations

Graham Fuller

America's Choice in the Middle East

Martin Indyk

Fukuyama, The Book

Kenneth Minogue

• • • ALSO • • •

Robert Novak on JFK

Arnold Beichman on Jeane Kirkpatrick

Robert Kaplan on Rebecca West

Did God Save Israel?

Avigdor Haselkorn

and much more

Subscribe today.

One year—four quarterly issues—only \$21

Send check, VISA or MasterCard number to:

The National Interest Subscription Department

P.O. Box 3000, Dept. NI, Denville, NJ 07834-9831

Available at better newsstands, or call 202/467-4884.

her mother died and she was brutally made to understand that, not being male, she was not qualified to serve in the *minyan* saying *kaddish*. (Though it left her desolated, she speculates now that her mother's death may have been a kind of blessing in disguise, because had her mother lived, she, Letty, would probably have gone to college in the neighborhood, married right after graduation, and settled into her mother's kind of stifling and stifled life. Thus has a prominent feminist made apparently unwitting comment on her own independence of mind and will.)

When a number of years later both her resentment and her ambition were offered expression in what was in fact a movement, women's liberation, Mrs. Pogrebin was not unmindful of the irony that it was the footsteps of her selfish and indifferent, but ardently activist, father, rather than those of her solicitous and loving mother, in which she was following. In any event, she not only joined that movement but became one of its leading lights—among other things a founding editor of *Ms.* magazine, and a highly visible advocate of “gender-free” child-rearing. (She herself is the mother of twin girls and a boy, all now grown to adulthood.)

Mrs. Pogrebin's subsequent “return” to Judaism—the event that confronted her with the draconian choice cited above—was rather more a case of the political becoming the personal. In 1975 and 1980 there were two UN-sponsored international conferences celebrating the Decade of the Woman, the first in Mexico City and the second in Copenhagen. Over the course of those five years, Mrs. Pogrebin was dragged into recognizing that some sisterhoods were more powerful than others: when third-world women shouted imprecations against Jews at those conferences, it was impossible to mobilize any real protest among Western, including American, feminist activists. For the women's movement had turned out to belong not so much to the history of feminism as to the history of radical leftism, and radical leftism had long since become not only anti-American but

in large part unabashedly anti-Semitic.

FOR Mrs. Pogrebin the discovery of leftist anti-Semitism was a kind of transforming trauma. Was this alone responsible for the ardor with which she set about attempting to find some new ground on which to stake her claim of connection to the Jewish community? On the basis of what she reveals in this book, it is hard to say, but the fact is that she instantly found herself among a company of other Jewish leftists, male as well as female, trying to do the same thing. For example, in the beach community at Fire Island where she and her family had been summering for years, a makeshift, barefoot, High Holiday service slapped together among a handful of friends—Mrs. Pogrebin herself being the only one present capable of chanting a few remembered prayers—grew within a short time into a full-blown congregation.

But what was even more significant for Mrs. Pogrebin was the emergence of a Jewish subcommunity made up exclusively of women. Of course the complaints of feminists against the alleged male chauvinism of Judaism were nothing new, but a female-centered Judaism, a sort of mirror image of the complained-against tradition, was an entirely novel confection.

This enclave by now embraces some women who, like Mrs. Pogrebin, have a grounding in Jewish tradition, even a genuine scholar or two, some rabbis, and a much larger cohort who, like her Fire Island neighbors, are pleased to make up the tradition as they go along.

As with so many attempts to tamper seriously with Jewish ritual, this one seems to have begun with the Passover Haggadah. Since 1976, there has been an annual third seder, attended faithfully by Mrs. Pogrebin and twenty to thirty other women, based on a Haggadah written by Esther Broner, an American, and Naomi Nimrod, who runs a parallel seder in Israel. The women sit on the floor with a cloth spread out before them. The Four Questions are directed to women instead of children; the

Four Sons become Four Daughters; and Elijah's cup is set aside for the prophetess Miriam.

This, however, was only the beginning. In addition to a special seder for women, there came into being special celebrations of the new moon, women's peace rituals, a special blessing to be said after undergoing an abortion, and much more along the same lines.

Although she herself tends to approach such new ceremonies “tentatively, convinced that I'm not the touchy-feely, crunchy-granola type,” Mrs. Pogrebin admits that inevitably she gets seduced “by the sweetness of sisterhood.” If, however, the sweetness gets her, cuteness, she says, does not. She does not approve of innovations like pink prayer shawls, lace skull caps, or beribboned phylacteries. Actually, prayer shawls, skull caps, and phylacteries of any kind are still too “gendered” for her, too much associated with her father and other men. And while professing to be happy that there are Orthodox women engaged in assigning new feminist meanings to their monthly post-menstrual ritual baths, she finds the *mikvah* unacceptable for herself.

Still, if she cannot quite get into the swing of every single innovation, her general inclination is to smile on all group expressions of the “new spirituality.” She tells approvingly of two feminist Jewish congregations in Los Angeles, and names three feminist “retreats” where those who gather “discuss spirituality and social activism in the context of class, race, sexuality, ethics, and ethnicity.” And in Philadelphia, she is glad to report, there is “a new progressive yeshiva that appeals especially to nontraditional students,” i.e., “women, lesbians, and gay men.”

Then there are the scholars: female historians engaged in placing women at the center of a reconstructed Jewish past, female Bible students who, while accepting the authority of the Bible, “redefine authority as partnership,” and female theologians who are “creating new *midrashim*.” All of these women are in one way or another acting, says Mrs. Pogrebin, on the

prescription of Paula Hyman, professor of Jewish history at Yale: "The study of the woman question in Judaism is as important as the study of the Jewish question in general history."

Mrs. Pogrebin is especially enthusiastic about Judith Plaskow, who argues that beyond revolutionizing history, Jewish feminist scholars are "claiming to amplify Torah, and thus questioning the finality of the Torah we have." For instance, Professor Plaskow, recognizing that the image of God as a Father is bound to evoke feelings about one's own earthly father, believes that women must find "God-language" that uses gentle, non-gendered words like "lover," "friend," "companion," and "co-creator," this last rooted in an understanding that "God and humanity are partners in sustaining creation."

IF THE "Deborah" side of Mrs. Pogrebin's Jewish ambitions involves amending God's purposes in the sex department, the "Golda" side more modestly involves only bringing peace to Israel through the spread of feminist values and "justice" to the Palestinians.

The mind boggles at this appropriation by a radical feminist of the figure of Golda Meir. To begin with, the real Golda never actually understood the American Left to which Mrs. Pogrebin belongs, particularly its hostility to the security needs—indeed, in many cases the very existence—of her country. And even less did she understand women's liberation. There is an account in this book of a meeting between Golda and a group from the United States that included such luminaries as Mary Anne Krupsak, then Lieutenant Governor of the state of New York, and Bella Abzug. Of this meeting it cannot even be said that she and they were ships that passed in the dark—they were simply not sailing the same waters.

Indeed, the real Golda Meir is undoubtedly tossing in her grave over the use of her name to symbolize a commitment based on what Mrs. Pogrebin calls "the 'P' words"—Peace and Palestinians. For the real Golda, in contrast to Mrs. Pogrebin, was quite firmly of

the opinion that the obstacle to peace was not Israel but its Arab neighbors. And as for the Palestinians, the real Golda did not even believe that they were a separate people.

ALL the stuff celebrated in Mrs. Pogrebin's book, from abortion blessings to forming human chains with Palestinians, could in a better world be greeted with the laughter it so richly deserves. Alas, this is not such a world, especially not for the state of Israel. All too many Israelis, particularly educated ones, have come to be fatally attracted to things American that their society can ill afford. I am referring not to expensive consumer goods, which cost only money, but rather to political fads and fashions that undermine a country's capacity to defend itself.

Such fashions seem to persist in Western democratic societies despite the repeated negative verdicts of elections, and they ensure their own longevity by infiltrating the public vocabulary. Prominent among them is the requirement that one regard one's own government as the enemy. This has at moments come dangerously close to doing serious damage even to so rich and protected and powerful a country as the United States. But for Israel, mindless oppositionism can literally be lethal. So can the unconsidered and unmodulated pressures for peacemaking that inevitably come bound up with women's liberation. (Mrs. Pogrebin's idea of how to make peace can be gauged by the fact that, but for a family priority, she would have been in Stockholm for the famous meeting between Yasir Arafat and a group of so-called "Jewish leaders.")

Nor is this the only danger that feminist ministrations pose for Israel. No doubt Israeli women have their special problems. No doubt the political grip of the Orthodox parties casts a certain shadow on the freedoms of nonreligious women—though less than is sometimes luridly supposed, as the beaches of Tel Aviv on a Sabbath afternoon amply testify. No doubt there are wife-beaters and abusers and dead-beats among the husbands of Israel.

But whatever it is that Israeli women lack, the very last thing on earth they need is a movement bent on unmanning, or to use Mrs. Pogrebin's favored euphemism, "ungendering," their men.

One might almost imagine that the anti-Semitic women who drove Mrs. Pogrebin and her like-minded sisters back to the Jewish "movement"—and especially to an active preoccupation with Israel—knew exactly what they were doing.

Tuning Out

THREE BLIND MICE: HOW THE TV NETWORKS LOST THEIR WAY. BY KEN AULETTA. *Random House.* 642 pp. \$25.00.

Reviewed by GEORGE RUSSELL

WHAT should we make of the decline of perhaps the most pervasive cultural and social—and therefore, in a real sense, political—institution of our time? Broadcast television is surely deserving of that description. It has knit the country together more intimately than railroads or highways; revolutionized, not to say undermined, our political discourse; changed the way we sell our goods and services; permanently altered our perception (image vs. substance, medium vs. message); rendered our social reactions instantaneous, and our memory, in many important ways, nonexistent.

Broadcast TV is also, as Ken Auletta's remarkable, and remarkably ponderous, book makes clear, a bureaucracy of great size, narrow vision, and stunning banality, with hardly a difference in this respect among CBS, ABC, and NBC. Unfortunately, the bureaucratic portrait is the one Auletta has chosen to paint. The result is a vast, rambling, unfocused work of journalism, full of intricate detail about matters that have not much significance outside the Manhattan skyscrapers where they were nurtured and hatched. The book is twice as fat as it should be. In this too it seems a true portrait from life.

Getting the likeness was undeniably a feat. Auletta is one of our

GEORGE RUSSELL is a senior editor at *Time* magazine.

most energetic and resourceful business journalists, with a cool eye for the technical complexities that underlie business reality and economic policy-making. *Three Blind Mice* shows that he is also a skillful persuader, one who talked the men in power at all three networks into letting him be a fly on the wall for six entire years—at board meetings, budget sessions, production and scheduling thrash-outs, in intimate interviews after important power struggles. Out of all this Auletta has gleaned some unique insights into corporate maneuvering, the economics of network television, and, more vaguely, about the management of the strange business of broadcast TV.

His baseline is 1985, a year when television was under assault from a number of sources: leapfrogging technological advances, like cable and videocassette recorders; an advertising recession; and, something less substantial, a shift in the *Zeitgeist* that Auletta attributes to the catchall 80's vice of profit-over-principle. The signal of that shift was the fact that over the course of 1985, all three ailing networks came under the control of new owners. NBC was bought by many-tentacled General Electric; ABC by small and frugal Capital Cities Communications; CBS, after several takeover bids and prolonged maneuvering, fell gradually to magnate Laurence A. Tisch.

IN EXAMINING the three management styles that attempted to put a new business stamp on the networks, Auletta is most clearly sympathetic with the style of Capital Cities, already in 1985 a small conglomerate that emphasized the values of Main Street rather than Sixth Avenue—but a broadcaster nonetheless. Auletta is much less enamored of the budget-cutting strategies of Tisch, among whose

alleged sins are his strong sympathies for Israel, which his detractors have called a possible threat to CBS newsroom integrity (though according to Auletta Tisch's anger over the treatment of Israel on *60 Minutes* never had any in-house consequences).

Whatever the differences among the three new owner-managers, there is plenty of common material here out of which to make an anti-business morality play, and in some ways Auletta would have liked to do so. The offstage hero of his epic is Grant Tinker, the production genius of MTM Enterprises who from 1980 to 1985 led NBC to ratings heights by giving power to creative writers and producers, ignoring the early returns, and adhering to his personal doctrines of quality. But this, says Auletta, was "at odds with the bottom-line managers then coming to dominate corporate America"—as if capitalism's Athenian period began in the 50's and ended with the Reagan administration.

AULETTA is far too good a journalist, however, simply to have produced a diatribe. The problem with this book lies, as I have already indicated, elsewhere. Auletta's method—the numbing, *New Yorker*-style compilation of facts, irrespective of their larger significance—robs the narrative of any compelling focus. Sometimes Auletta scores a hit, as with his detailed story of the ouster of CBS Chairman Tom Wyman by Tisch and the network's late founder, William Paley. Other times he misses, as with his lengthy reconstruction of producer Aaron Spelling's dud series, *Nightingales*. In general, too much is unmemorable, and remains unmemorable.

Auletta's method ignores the truth that a fly on the wall must find the right walls to be a fly on.

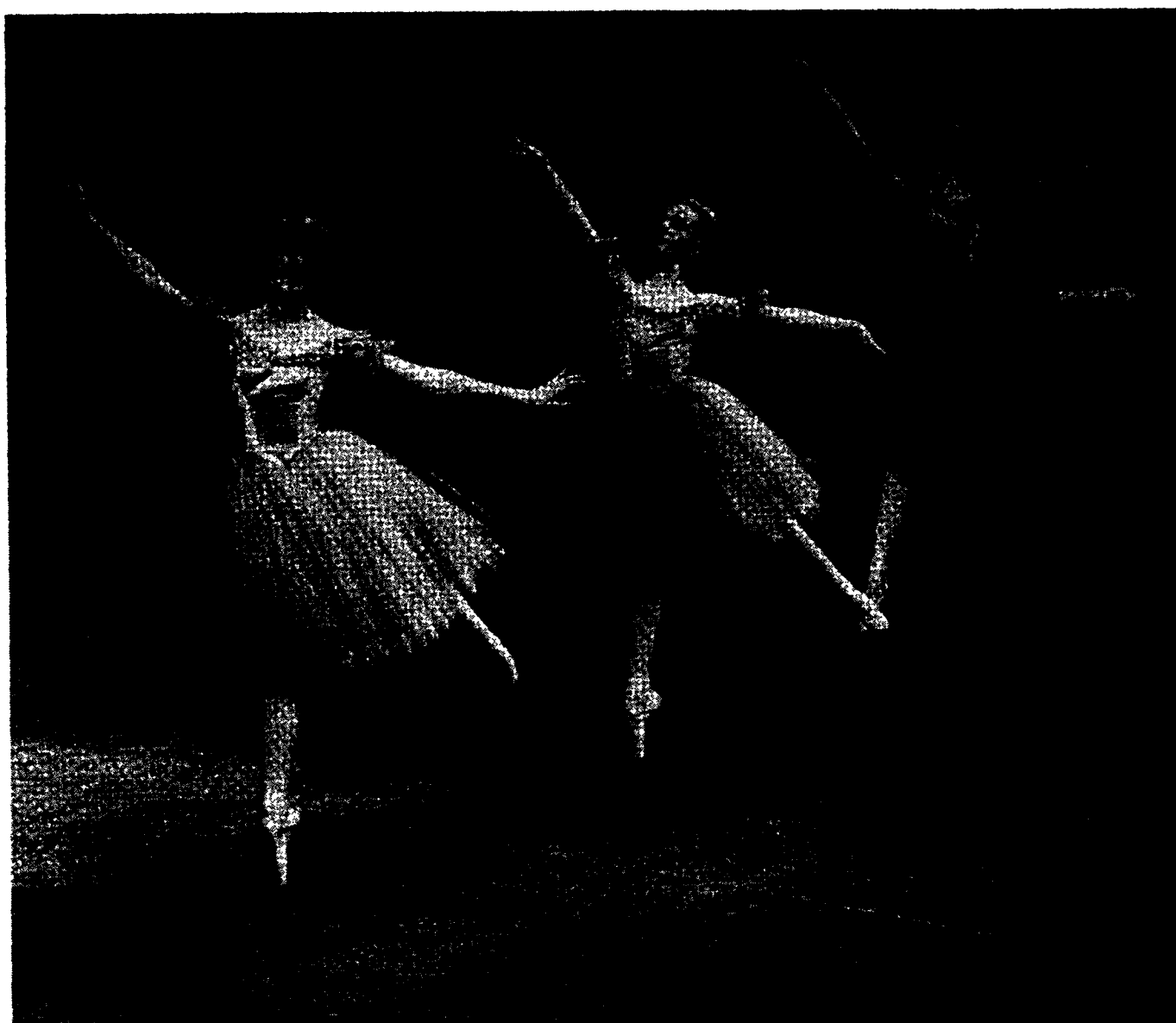
He could have spent more time on those in the newsroom. Though he did talk with line producers and other newsroom types, as well as with top news executives and anchormen, the story Auletta assembles is mostly, again, bureaucratic, about battles over budgets and maneuvering for titles. How the networks actually go about their news operations, and what they accomplish, is either taken for granted or has just been left out.

This omission is all the more striking since Auletta deliberately pits the business-only view of broadcast television against the notion, popular in varying degrees at all three networks, that television is in some measure a "public trust," a place where values higher than mere money prevail. As Auletta summarizes the feeling, "One of the joys of working for a network was the sense that it was more than a way to make a living, it was a calling." Presumably, the newsroom is where this feeling is at its most intense.

What is the "public trust" that the networks claim to preserve, and how does it differ from the usual pious assertions of any monopoly? Does the quality of network news bear out such a claim? Where is the "public trust" in the vast bulk of TV entertainment? What is, in fact, the future of the networks? In a short sign-off chapter, Auletta noodles briefly with the big picture:

What seems certain is that if the networks are to survive and perhaps thrive, they must be permitted to produce and own and sell more of the product. . . . Standing alone, the networks may die. With additional revenue sources or partners, the good times may return.

Six years of research and 642 pages, for this? Network downsizing should have started here.



School of American Ballet student performance: Merrill Ashley, Gebej Kirkland and Colleen Neary. Copyright: Martha Swope, 1967.

Thanks to the Library, American dance has taken great leaps forward.

American dance is more popular than ever, and one of the reasons is The New York Public Library's Dance Collection.

Choreographer Eliot Feld says the Library at Lincoln Center is "as vital a workroom as my studio." Agnes de Mille says, "the revival of any work is dependent on access to the Library's Dance Collection."

And they're not the only ones. For dancers and choreographers everywhere, over 37,000

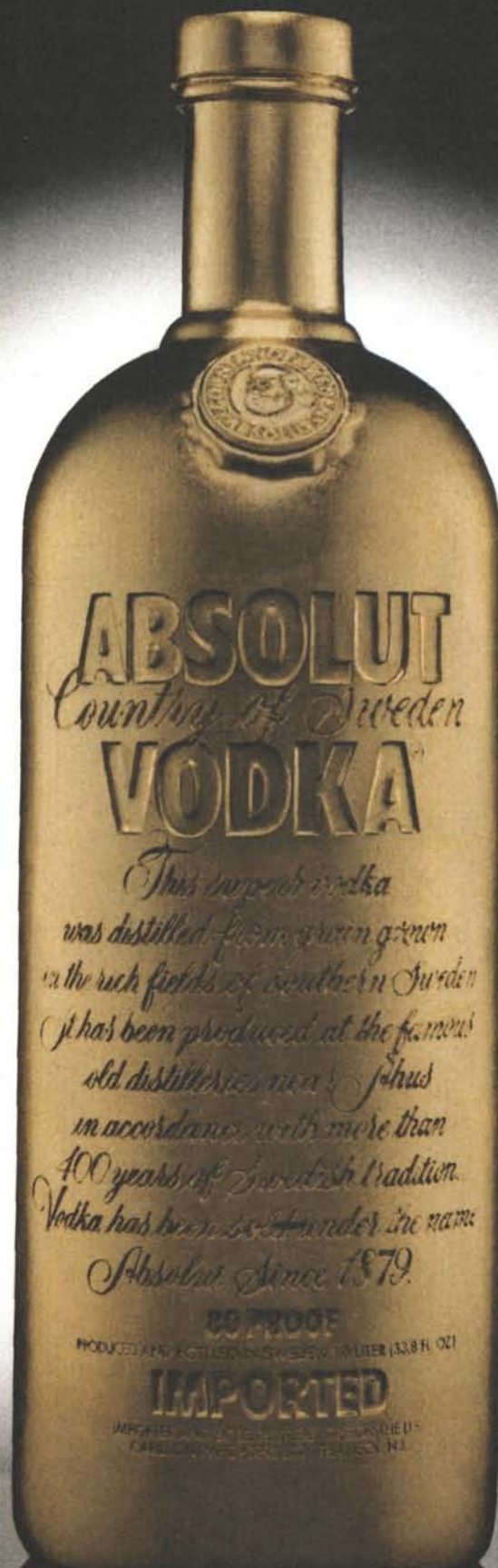
volumes, 250,000 photographs, and an enormous film archive have been essential elements in the renaissance of American dance.

That's just one way The New York Public Library's resources serve us. The Library offers plays and puppet shows for children, programs for the elderly and disabled, extensive foreign language and ethnic collections, and scientific journals vital to the business community.

Again and again, the Library enriches our lives.



The New York Public Library
WHERE THE FUTURE IS AN OPEN BOOK



ABSOLUT STANDARD.

FOR GIFT DELIVERY OF ABSOLUT® VODKA (EXCEPT WHERE PROHIBITED BY LAW) CALL 1-800-CHEER-UP.
PRODUCT OF SWEDEN. 40 AND 50% ALC/VOL (80 AND 100 PROOF). 100% GRAIN NEUTRAL SPIRITS. © 1988 CARILLON IMPORTERS, LTD., TEANECK, NJ.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED